A VICTORIAN VILLAGE

Lizette Woodworth Reese

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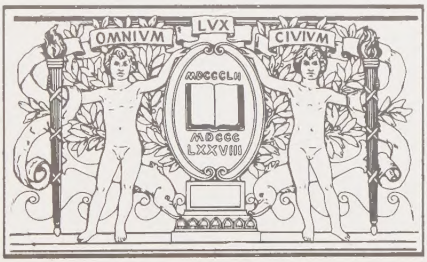

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A VICTORIAN VILLAGE

BY

Lizette Woodworth Reese

A BRANCH OF MAY
A HANDFUL OF LAVENDER
LITTLE HENRIETTA
A QUIET ROAD
SELECTED POEMS
SPICEWOOD
WAYSIDE LUTE
WILD CHERRY

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WAVERLY

A
VICTORIAN VILLAGE

Reminiscences of Other Days

BY

Lizette Woodworth Reese

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A VICTORIAN VILLAGE

Babylon

How many miles to Babylon?
Three score and ten.
Can I get there by candlelight?
Yes, and back again.

Nursery Rhyme

You change. I change. Not Babylon.
Not Babylon at all,
And its rich, quiet loveliness;
Field, turnpike, wall.

The county carts in creaking blue,
At a whip's crack,
Go up the hill, and down the hill
And then creak back.

In Sunday dusks the small girls pull
The larkspurs there,
For pink-white wreaths to set within
Their books of prayer.

The Smell of Cedar

I NEVER smell the spice and tang of freshly pulled cedar, without seeing my small sister and myself racing up through Saint John's churchyard on a gray afternoon, at the end of the year, and stopping just inside the church door, to watch the men and women of the parish trim the reverend building for the oncoming festival of Christmas. A gray afternoon many years ago, with the sky the color of an old pearl. There was no wind.

There was no sound indeed but the hushed words of the workers now and again. Some of these were engaged in tacking up the long festoons of evergreen, made of bundles of twigs tied together, around the narrow, stained windows, or about the chancel rails; others were busy with the muslin shields, illuminated in red and white Old English letters, that were to grace the walls between the windows. Others were gathered about the carved oak pulpit and the reading desk. How like the woods the church smelled! And

how dream-like shone the east window, where stood resplendent all the year round tall Saint Matthew and tall Saint Luke in their robes of scarlet, and purple, and apple-green! Their half-lit solemn faces stared down upon us there. It was a place we had never known before, and yet all the more lovely because of its strangeness.

I have another picture then of our racing along the York Road on that same gray afternoon, toward an old house, which lifted on the edge of the village of Waverly, an old house one story in front, and two stories behind, with a garret window, and a wide front door, set down in high, dark trees. It faced the sunset; under its west windows grew tall, trailing bushes, that for a week in June were full of hundred-leaved roses, very thick and sweet.

We precipitated ourselves through the wide entrance, and into the dimly lighted parlor, and upon the smiling, gray-eyed woman standing in the middle of the room. Directly before her rose a low, small table, and upon it was arranged a set of dolls' dishes, a tea-set of white china, with rows of green and brown dots crowding along the edges of the plates, and of the cups and saucers, and these dishes

were quite large enough for us to use for ourselves, if we had a mind to, and this made them a double joy and delight to us. We danced and pranced about them, and hung over them with breathless, ecstatic cries, half listening all the while to our mother, as she told us of how she had tramped from shop to shop in the town two miles away, to get them for our Christmas present from herself, and how some sets were too tiny, and some too expensive and others too dull. And as we listened, in some odd, soft way we connected her with Someone Else, with some beneficent Being who came down the chimneys on the evening before December the twenty-fifth and bestowed a myriad different and enchanting gifts upon the world, but especially upon those favored people who lived—as we did—between the toll-gates on the York Road.

This was the age of faith. We were as sure of God as we were of the sun. Christmas had a reality that clutched us hard; we were of it, and it was of us. In my family, from my grandparents down to my youngest sister—who was an imp with dark blue eyes and cherubic flaxen curls—this holiday and all others included a constant and savory

procession of cakes, from crisp, round, clove-spiced ginger ones, and thick, sugar-topped loaves, fat and black with raisins, to the flat sheets baked in shallow pans, and concocted from a recipe which my grandmother had brought with her from the German country town where she had been born. This incomparable creation of dead and gone Saxon cooks consisted of two layers, the bottom one of sweetened dough, the other a mixture of cornmeal, butter, sugar, cinnamon and handfuls of currants. You took a mouthful, and wished for nothing better in this world. In comparison to this a sack of gold was but puny dross. You forgave your enemies; you meditated giving of your goods to the poor. It was indigestible to the last degree; it had the faculty—at the first touch of your lips—of crumbling into small bits and dropping down to the floor; there was never quite enough of it to go around or to satisfy its lovers, but it remained then, and in memory remains now, the inimitable effort of some man or some woman who thought well of his or her kind, and wished to bequeath them something to be forever remembered by.

With what tempered and repressed delight did we children hover round our elders at

night, while they gilded walnuts, or rubbed apples until they were as glossy as our own cheeks after our mother's scrubbing, or tied strings to various blunt-legged, thick-headed candy figures with which to decorate the tree that was to be selected and cut down in the woods a half mile away!

There were but two shops down in the village, but although the two possessed a miscellaneous and multitudinous stock of articles, they were all of the common and necessary kind. You might buy a spool of cotton out of a pasteboard box on a packed shelf, but not one of silk, or a hank of embroidery wool. A toy was nowhere to be found. If the villagers wished something of finer quality, or for decorative use, or an unusual social occasion—a doll, a ribbon, a book, material for a new frock—they were obliged to procure the same in Baltimore, which was somewhat over two miles away. They either arrived there by means of their own vehicles—often rather ill-looking affairs, with a flap and a creak for every foot of the way, or by the omnibus, a high-hung, weather-battered lordly conveyance, that rolled weightily through the village on its way to town at a brisk hour every morning,

and returned toward the end of every afternoon. A week before Christmas my female relatives departed in couples for a day-long shopping expedition, to be welcomed back home just before sunset, happy, tired, important, their arms and satchels bulging with bundles and packages, both small and large, straight and crooked, to be deposited in safe and secret places until the time for their proper holiday distribution.

A ride to Baltimore in the omnibus at any season of the year was, to the York Roaders, a matter of meticulous satisfaction. They became at once men and women of the world. The tongues of the tribes of the earth, so general and confused was the chatter, sounded in their ears. Their neighbors from the county-seat a half dozen miles up the pike grew as friendly in ten crisp minutes as under other circumstances they would have grown in as many hours. From the faded and uneasy cushions of the noisy equipage, they saw a familiar and pastoral country becoming very aloof and strange. Was that the blacksmith shop standing in its wide, althea-shaded, almost prehistoric place? Through its two great opened doors they could see the sparks flashing scarlet as they rattled by. Was

that Frisby's Woods slipping in its green, lovely fashion toward the haze-filled west, or some immeasurably distant stretch of trees, row after row, cut out of a book? Every traveler trudging through the dust below was a poor creature, while they were the true adventurers, rich, expectant, encompassed by dreams.

The coming back later in the day, after the hurry and hustle of town, through the first glow of the sunsetting, was somewhat different. The constant beauty of well-known and simple things was theirs again. They possessed themselves of the blue of the sky and the green of the yards. Nothing was too much of a trifle to pass unnoticed. If the latch of Mrs. Keller's front gate needed mending, some eye among them was sharp to see it. The dahlias in the Stran garden were the color of apples ready to fall. It was almost time for the stars to come out. They alighted each at his own house, and drew a long breath. Blessed was a holiday, but twice, aye thrice blessed was home!

When the omnibus stopped its daily running, to stand idle and grow worm-eaten in some disused country stable, and a horse-car took its place, something of all this came to

an end, never to return; life grew more detached, less human.

At that time there was no post office in the neighborhood. People in general were obliged to have their mail directed in the care of friends in the city, preferably the proprietors of shops, and made periodical visits there to claim it. A double object was attained by this; they carried home their favorite kind of fine groceries, or particular pieces of wool or cotton cloth, or cans of smoking tobacco, and their expected letters as well.

The lively little gentleman with the short black curls, who acted as postmaster for my grandfather's family, was neither a buyer nor a seller of loaf sugar, or Java coffee, or India tea, nor of clocked hose, or crêpe shawls, or embroidery silks; he was the sole master of a huge wholesale drug store, where a perpetual latent odor of camphor—which we children always associated with a great blue wooden, iron-bound chest that stood in the garret, and preserved our winter coats and frocks from the moth-ridden summers—of turpentine, and tar, and thick long bars of pinkish Castile soap, and all of these together, were mixed and brewed into an atmosphere that penetrated every corner of the shop and

even to the sunny and noisy street without. This gentleman's Christian name was Solomon, not only an explicit reminder to the child, who was the fortunate participant in this journey to the city, of the Old Testament, but the corresponding disappointment in regard to the same. For this boyish man, quick on his feet, and ready, too ready with his jokes, wore neither a crown nor a purple cloak, nor was there anywhere in the neighborhood the attendant paraphernalia or the dignity of a king; neither was he kingly of speech. A small child is not susceptible to humor, especially when it takes the form of jokes; he feels a crude sort of superiority to the unintelligible things. Sometimes the ensuing conversation would take place:

"Have you any letters for us to-day?" would ask my sprightly, auburn-haired aunt.

"None to-day, ma'm. I'll write you one."

"I'm sorry. I've come a long way to be disappointed."

Then he would bend himself double under a gale-like laughter, so hearty and so compelling that everyone within hearing would chuckle in sympathy, everyone, indeed, except myself, who, turned for the moment into a disapproving little prig, stood there

beside my aunt, and stared gravely at my inexplicable, foolish elders. But when the two of them began immediately and eagerly to discuss ships, and cargoes of lumber, and captains, and Chile, I pricked up my disdainful ears,—for these things were included in one of the classics of my grandfather's house—the story of an uncle who had sailed to South America, and established a factory, and become wealthy, and whose letters were the chief of those which were kept for us in the impeccable custody of the brisk little gentleman, by the name of Solomon. We had never seen this uncle, except in a daguerreotype lying closed from week's end to week's end on the table—covered with a scarlet cloth—which stood between the windows in the parlor. We knew that he spoke several languages, that he was witty, and kind, and rich, and the oldest of my grandparents' sons. Another daguerreotype showed us his wife, our aunt, a very fair woman, with a lace shawl thrown over her head. To say that we possessed an uncle who had gone to Chile, was an indisputable asset to the juvenile members of the family; it was almost the equivalent of saying he had gone to glory, which phrase was part of the intimate evan-

gelical vocabulary of the day. Sometimes we youngsters inveigled our little grandmother into a corner, and pinning her down there, wheedled her into repeating a few Spanish words which she knew. At the first sound of these we went into convulsions of mirth, not because they were essentially funnier than our English words, but because they were different, and the odd conventionality of children revolts against a thing to which they are not accustomed every day and every night.

"Say it again, grandmother!" the small ruffians would cry in chorus, "Say it again!"

At last our little grandmother would grow angry, and push us away.

To receive a letter in that day was to receive something most precious. To a York Roader it was doubly so, for to the joy of receiving it, must be added the trouble and delight of the journey to town. It was like gold twice tried in the furnace. It was brought home at sunset, and looked at lengthwise and sidewise and behind and before, which has been and always will be the immemoriably stupid way of dealing with a letter, in order to make a guess at the writer and so delay the opening. Then it was read, and if

not too private, reread to the interested and assembled family, thereby enriching their conversation for several weeks to come. It was a minute chronicle of the affairs of a certain number of people and incidentally of their community, catholic in its inclusion of small and great and almost apostolic in its fervor in dilating about the same. Nothing was too unimportant to be left out. It was a human document. Its leisurely and detailed contents were absorbed by the receiver and the audience, and talked about, and quoted—as I have said—and eventually allowed—or at least some portion of them—to dribble out to the waiting neighborhood. Yellow with age and thrust in the back of some dust-thick desk, or bureau, or other piece of furniture, standing forgotten along an attic wall, they read to the modern finder like the sound of some fresh, eager voice retailing the intimate history of a dead and buried period. Straightened out of their involved sentences, and set in better rhetoric, they still talk to this generation in the following fashion:

"Do you remember the linden-tree which used to stand at the end of our street? It blew down the other day in a high wind.

You don't know how we miss it. It threw a shade as far as our front door."

"Mary Ellen has just got over the measles. We kept her in a dark room on account of her eyes, and gave her hot elderberry tea to drink. The doctor says that what we did was all right. All the other children had it too, but only slightly. Mary Ellen's was the worst and the last."

"The men are all talking politics. Job says he never believed in slavery, but he never did care for Yankees. And now they're fighting in Virginia. I guess you read the papers."

"Old Doctor Graham is dead. He fell as he was getting into his buggy at his own door one day last week. His wife died two years ago, and he was very lonely and ailing, with no near relatives. And now he's in a happier place."

Life at that time was an unhurried and secure affair. Something of the individual filtered down into practically every experience in human living. Hand-made furniture stood in every house; its reality was counted a fine and fitting thing; it was almost as though there were a kind of secret sympathy between the one who had created and those

who had bought or inherited it. If a carpenter built even a shed for his neighbor, he sawed out and shaped and made its window frames and doors, in his own shop, and when the simple building was completed, it represented not only the days of labor which had been put into its making, but also something of the mechanic who had thought, and talked and sweated over it. A few sewing machines were in use here and there in the village, but the majority of the housewives still did their own sewing in the old fashion, or employed some seamstress to do it for them. Every little girl was taught by her mother to run a seam, and often, when she was mature enough to do more than this, was set to work on a half dozen shirts for her father, as a surprise present on his birthday or at Christmas. A hand-sewed shirt was often an exquisite thing. The gathers were "scraped" by a fine needle, so that each was as even as the other. The button-holes were like rich French embroidery, and the stitches on the cuffs and the collar as regular and delicate as though they had been measured. When the family's hand-sewed shoes grew shabby, as to heel or sole, they were carried to the village shoemaker, or rather cobbler, and brought back mended

by his own trained fingers. A factory boot or slipper was a plebeian product; it intimated that you were not so warm in your financial matters, as were the rest of your neighbors. To have your measure taken for a pair of shoes was a hereditary affair. The seamstress and the cobbler were the normal conservators of the county gossip. The first brought it along with her as she brought her tapes, and needles, and scissors, as part of her calling; with the second it constituted and maintained a masculine centre about which flowed a gay or sombre tide of the hundred happenings for miles around.

The idea of the individual, and the acceptance of the responsibility attached to that idea were everywhere. Seldom were orphan children entered at asylums, or aged relatives in institutions for such people. The former were adopted into the families of friends or kindred; and the latter remained with their sons or daughters or other relatives until the end of their earthly lives. There were such agencies as these, to be sure, but it would have been considered a public and permanent disgrace to allow the state or the church to clothe and lodge any creature of your own flesh and blood.

"I never married," said an old woman to me when I was a girl, "I ain't sorry. I couldn't have taken such good care of my mother."

Everywhere the personal attitude was evident. Saint John's folks went out into the woods and felled pine and cedar trees, and gathered the branches into wreathings with which to decorate narrow nave or great chancel, or sat up late at night to cut out red and white Old English letters for fastening upon shields and banners, to be used for the same purpose. When their work was finished, the beautiful church, one of the most beautiful in Western Maryland, was more their own than it had ever been before.

This personal interest was shown particularly in periods of illness. There was always some woman in the family, or amongst its friends, who had an acknowledged knack for nursing, and was eager to give her services, and, although judged by modern hospital standards, they were almost altogether faulty, on the other hand the human element included in them, maintained a balance, which often covered up any weakness in the mechanical arrangements. There was nothing perfunctory in the business of nursing. To look

up from a sick pillow, in your own house, and in your own chamber, and see a familiar figure in a familiar chair, and in its usual frock and apron, took much of the strangeness and helplessness from illness away, and part of the bitterness of the draughts held to your lips, and must have gone far in bringing about a favorable turn toward your recovery. For it is true now, as it was then, and ever will be, that no training, however thorough and however adequate, can produce the love and faculty for a profession which come by nature and the grace of God. And leaving out the Sairey Gamp type—which unfortunately had occasionally to be reckoned with—the average nurse of that period was generally a person and not a machine, and far more capable, and intelligent, and dependable than people of these days are ready to believe.

Death was a solemn fact, not to be run away from, but to be faced, a cup which must be drunk down to the dregs. To send the dead body of a beloved relative or friend to an undertaker's establishment—which is sometimes done in these days, owing to the exigencies of apartment houses—or to remain upstairs while the funeral services were being conducted below, or to refrain from wearing

mourning garments for a suitable length of time for one near of kin, and, while wearing them, to absent oneself from all assemblies for amusement only, would have been considered an act not only of disrespect, but, because these were incorporated so closely with current opinions upon the subject, as one of irreverence. These were not merely conventions, but, although overemphasized at times, a recognition of the importance of the individual. There was less fear in regard to death than there is now. I was a child when my grandmother died, but I remember my cousin and me going out into the garden, and both of us clipping the purple asters to be made into a wreath for her coffin. This homely service, and the sight of her afterwards in the quiet room with the flowers we had gathered about her, took much of the sting and awfulness from our sense of loss. Walking funerals in this rural community were not uncommon. To see one of this kind moving slowly along, with the coffin carried by the nearest kinsmen, and the family in a solid, dark-hued procession behind, the bell tolling in the meantime from Saint John's steeple, was to see, by reason of its very real simplicity, an impressive sight.

Everybody attended funerals, in part due to the active curiosity so persistent in country places, and also in a greater part from an honest desire to show respect. Even children attended these sober services. One of the small tragedies of my childish experience is connected with the funeral of a child. My mother had made my sister and myself each a new frock of gray delaine, sprinkled at close intervals with little nosegays of green, and blue, and pink flowers, and fastened at the back with rows of most incomparable gilt buttons. I am quite sure that I thought more of that frock, and in particular of the buttons, than I did of my immortal soul. The short bench on which I sat was unsteady on its legs; it moved; my dress caught; I pulled, and lo, a long rent! In my agony of spirit I cried out aloud. The assembled family, sitting in the firm-fastened pews directly behind, where they could keep an eye upon my rollicking twin and myself, looked stolidly ahead. Tall Saint Matthew and tall Saint Luke, out of their blaze of scarlet, and purple, and apple-green, stared, stared. But the rector, more human than these apostolic personages, shook an admoni-

tory finger at me. I was ashamed to go home. I was afraid to be seen in church again.

A half mile away from the old house stood the toll-gate, which was opened at a certain time in the morning, and closed at a certain time each night. The money taken in tolls was expended in paying the keeper, and toward the repair of the road. Any time of the year you could see poorly clad men, roughened by the weather, breaking stone in the highway, to be deposited afterward by the cartful along its length and breadth, for a rod or two, or by the wheelbarrow load in the occasional hollows and depressions on the sides nearest to the fences. The tollkeeper himself was a character of avid interest to the elder villagers, and to the younger section a most pictorial individual. The elders somberly hinted at his filling his pockets with unlawful lucre, but to us—could he not hold back from their legitimate journeyings any number of vehicles, until there was handed out to him the proper amount due the county in their tolls? And did he not at times sally forth at midnight, or very early in the morning, with a lantern in his hand, in response to sundry knockings, and bawlings, and doubtless cursings, to open his gate and allow

some belated traveler to hurry through? What a picture he made there with his swinging light! A dark figure standing in the dark, with the toll-house sharp behind him, and the black bulk of the vehicle before him, and beyond the steeple of Saint John's leaping up to the stars. For an imaginative child living on the York Road, to wake up at night and remember the closed toll-gate half a mile below, and the closed one farther up the pike, was to have a feeling of safety not to be put into words. I felt as though walled in from all evil and hurt. That feeling, and the knowledge that my mother slept near at hand in an alcove of the big attic enwrapped me in a honied security which nothing could disturb. When this part of the county was absorbed by Baltimore City, and taxes were substituted for tolls, and the gates were torn down, something went—as in the case of the omnibus—which would never come again.

When I thought, years after, of the pastures in front of my grandfather's house, a line of one of Watts's hymns—"Green fields beyond the swelling flood"—came into my mind. If as a child, I thought of this line—and I was, as many a child of that period, hymn-rich—then these pastures were my first

idea of heaven. There were great trees everywhere about in the village. A huge sycamore in the place next to us, down near the entrance gate, with its splotched, hide-like trunk, its wide, almost spare looking branches, and its rude, definite, pear-green leaves, was a thing to be looked at again and again. Every house had its garden. In the Baden garden, a stone's throw from the toll-gate, there had once grown a lot of lavender, and when it blossomed folks had come out of town on Sunday afternoons, and bought bunches of it to put away between their sheets. But this was a tradition. I knew, however, that on May Day, and often early in the morning, they rifled the lilac bushes along the road, or—and these were the decenter sort—paid down their honest silver and returned home laden with the village's fragrant white and purple. Altogether it was a green quiet country, with scattered houses, with stretches of orchard and meadow, and although within easy-reaching distance from Baltimore, almost as obscure as though it stood on the edge of a desert. A green, quiet place, well-beloved, and long-remembered.

An Old House

What is like an old house?
Every lovely matter:
Brambles at the flowering;
Honey on a platter.

Thrushes singing in a wood,
In a lonely rote;
Starlight; pale silks; sighing books;
The sob in a throat.

The House

HALFWAY down a wall in the east chamber of the old house hung the portrait of a middle-aged woman, wearing a ruffled cap, a blue frock, and a pale green shawl. Her eyes were as blue as her frock; in one hand she carried a sprig or two of forgetmenots. It was a stiff picture, stiffly drawn, and poorly colored, but the story which was its heritage gave it a look, an atmosphere which made it far-off, separate, different. My grandparents had been intrusted with its care when they had set out as political refugees—in danger of arrest—from the chronically rebellious districts of Southern Germany in the eighteen-forties. It was the portrait of a mother whose only son had sailed years before to the new and fortunate republic across the water. She had said: "Keep this until you see my boy; then give it to him. It may make him remember his poor, waiting mother."

Her son had never been found; although the search was faithfully pursued, it became eventually a search for a mist, a moving

phantom. A vague mention of a town here, a town there, or perhaps a rumor of a man by his name in some obscure farming section gave a transient clue once in a while, and then all mention of him came to an end. When we children looked up at the middle-aged face in its frame on the wall, the blue eyes stared poignantly down at us, as though their mistress were wondering at the long years passing by, as though she were asking why the secret of her boy's unbroken silence were still unrevealed to her.

Outside of the house stood Paradise trees, with their strangely tropical tufts of leaves stretching against a great space of curving sky; clumps of white lilac bushes lifted near, at their roots a patch of vivid green tansy, whose stalks we used to rub between our small fingers, and marvel, each time we did so, at their bitterness. Between the bushes and the house grew a garden, where, in the grass, spring after spring, the daffodils came up, yellow and untended. Beyond lay an orchard. Back of all, and at an easy distance from the windows on that side, were a hen-house, a workshop—its floor thick with fresh-colored shavings—and a sharp-roofed stable.

The master of this old and entrancing

estate—some three or four acres all told—was my grandfather, a tall, gray-bearded, erect man, with the stride of a viking, and eyes as blue as those of the sad lady in the east chamber upstairs; no bluer eyes were ever put into a human head than those of my grandfather. Sometimes he spoke the sprawling German of the Saxon, and it had in it the salty music of the words in a prayer-book, and sometimes a precise, uneasy English. He made trifling household appliances, or a toy or two in the workshop at the rear of the house, or occasionally mended a refractory piece of furniture for some clumsy neighbor down the country road. I thought of him, if a child ever thinks objectively of an elder, as of a kind but ducal person—or rather personage. Our relations were often formal rather than intimate. I divined that he considered me, in view of the reputation which my sisters and I had acquired in the suburban neighborhood, a wild, unevangelized slip of a creature, part boy, part colt, part devil, and so approached him in a shy, meticulous manner, with my tongue twisted into careful speech. Had he been told of my latest adventure by tree or roof? The land was full of spies. Had one of the many acquainted him

with my new and incredibly satisfactory fashion of reaching home from school—by hanging on to the back of a passing vehicle, and racing along with it through the dust at the risk of being jerked off into the deep, moist ditch on the side of the road?

He was of a swift and violent temper. Once, or so ran the story told, he appeared late at the mid-day meal, and, on being questioned by a nagging relative in regard to his previous whereabouts, responded to the presumably impertinent inquisition by pitching the dinner dishes out of the opened window. This spirited affair and the exact and turbulent language spoken upon the occasion, took on in time the color and body of a classic, and became to the unregenerate element in the family a subject for light and gleeful reminiscence.

And yet he possessed in full the quick generosity seldom to be found lacking in a ready and impulsive disposition. He never broke his word. He was the peacemaker in the rural community, a just counselor, the ultimate judge in matters beyond the wisdom or the will of the villagers to settle. His very name, Charles Frederick Gabler, was full of dignity as well as assurance. And more than

all, was he religious. The most exquisite memory I have of him resolves itself into certain long Sunday afternoons, when the house was a well of stillness, and the very light seemed tempered down into a mellowing, sweet dimness. On these afternoons he sat on a settle in one of the back rooms, his grey head bowed over the pages of his time-worn, leather-covered German Bible. I would creep on hushed feet past the opened door, feeling myself in some way a part of an immemorial and lovely ceremony. There was a sense of communion in the air; of something deep, unshaken; of fellowship with homely and yet distant and imperishable things.

Strange people came to this old house under the Paradise trees; vehement men, eager of look, sure and impressive of gesture, and with an astounding and almost frightening flow of speech. They spoke in German, and smoked pipes, and drank frothing beer out of high, shining glasses. And always they talked of politics, politics; politics in the new, and politics in some old and very far-off country. Perhaps one of them would open a metal snuff box, and pass it around from the first to the last in a stiff, measured, punctilious fashion.

Sometime, crammed into a narrow, creaking vehicle behind a serious-colored horse, my grandparents, accompanied by us children, would return the visit of one of these bewildering gentlemen. But little do I remember of that trip across the county. It must always have been in the summer, for a transient impression remains of heat, sun, the smell of dust and the look of the grass withering in the interminable meadows, and afterwards of a shady house, and trees, and the yelping of dogs. In the house stood an organ tall and solemn with pipes, built by the music-mad hands of the master. And even now he is remembered by that organ. Although a village stands where once were those shadowed gables and unchimneyed stretches of land, it all bears his name, and there can be found here and there an elderly villager who has a word or two to say about the wistful-eyed man and his divine knack for playing.

Who, if not Doctor Ward Robert, was the unchallenged potentate of the county-side? Plodding in his familiar buggy through the Waverly lanes, and across country, in every kind of wind and weather, he was also indisputably a part of our deepest and most trying

experiences. If a patient demurred in the merest particular to what he commanded to be done; if the dose were too bitter, or the plaster too severe, Dr. Robert would fix him with a cool grey eye, and presently announce, in distinct and decisive English, his exact opinion of him. Scarcely were the words out of his mouth when the dose was swallowed, the plaster applied. In a measure feared, in a much greater measure was he loved. To have the sight of that stalwart, unbending back, that shaggy grey head, that gallant cool eye, or the sound of that harsh, dominating voice, was to us rural folks an assurance of our national existence. Our earth still revolved on its axis; the morning stars still sang in their courses.

He had odd and obdurate notions in regard to monetary affairs. Sometimes he visited a family for years without sending the head of it a bill for his services, and as likely as not, when the amount was put into his hands, he would pull out a five or ten dollar note, and proffer it back again. The more generous his deed, the more caustic his tongue. Always busy, yet he found time, standing at the door, a hand upon the knob, to listen to the hundred happenings of our brief bucolic

week. One of my grandfather's jokes would send him off into a chuckling far down in his throat, or into a fit of laughter which was like that of the gods. For his was the intimate humanity of a brave, capable, yet imperfect man, and it was as fundamental a piece of him, as were the smack of the weathers on his face, or the smell of the wayside herbs on his coat. He was one of us; he fought for our lives, and oftener than not, came out a victor in the fight.

I think that perhaps Dr. Robert, in his profession as a country practitioner, was more representative of the period and its most evident characteristics than any other man in the community. He was more important as an individual. Surgeon, dentist, confessor, sometimes lawyer, his experiences were those of the spirit as well as of the body. He could set a leg, extract a tooth, excoriate a drunken husband, damn a shiftless one, counsel a too-fond mother, or provide food and blankets, as well as medicine, for any number of poor patients. His very time, with its limitations and its ignorances, drew out any nobility that was in him. There was no surfeit of knowledge, but perhaps more wisdom. In scarcity there is sometimes strength.

And if this could be said of Doctor Robert, it could also be said of hundreds of other men in the same profession, and filling like him, obscure yet responsible positions in the rural sections of the state. Like him they were reverenced and often beloved; and like him, when they came to die, a numerous company of people believed with all their souls that they would never see that kind again.

Another figure passed across the restricted horizon of my childhood. It was that of a cousin-in-law, a commander in the United States Navy, whose baptismal name of Selim doubled my delight and pride in him. That his family name was Woodworth became an unimportant and puerile matter; the first swallowed up the congenital homeliness of the second. For Selim was indubitably the cognomen of a horse, and were not some of my most entrancing, too-brief moments those which were spent in listening to my elders talk of pacers, and trotters, and leppers and of races of all kinds and fashions and degrees? And had not Flora Temple, bright and brown, and swift and famous, gone familiarly up and down the York Road, before her owner had sold her for a certain legendary number of dollars to a northern millionaire?

And Selim was also undoubtedly an Oriental name—or so said those same elders—and I tasted Cathay, and Ind, and Samarcand, and spicy strange things out of king's palaces every time I took it upon my tongue.

I remember this cousin as a stocky, short man, dark of complexion, with dark, curly hair, and a sailor's open, quick, salty manner. He was like the gods to me, because, like them, he was the purveyor of welcome gifts.

The old house was lovely at all times, but especially so in the spring, when the daffodils flamed up in the grass, yellow and untended. It was a haunted thing in the autumn, with the dead leaves lying thick about it, and cracking like pieces of glass under the tread of our careless feet. And it was loveliest of all in the summer dusk. Opposite stretched a great pasture, curving down into the great western sky, and this sky blazed at dusk with orange or scarlet, dwindling down as the minutes went, into thin lemon, or vague mauve. The air was full of pricking half-noises, and above them, like the cut of a knife, the shrill of the peacocks across in the Macdonald Farm. We children sat out on the front steps in the soft light, clinging closely together; behind us gleamed the one window in the attic, col-

ored with the west, and before us the furlongs of vast rich sky, thrust through with that separate and knife-like sound. We were sad; we felt ourselves alone in a wide, bare world.

But houses go. The town pushes out, and clutches the fair meadowlands, and the uneven lanes are straightened into uniform streets, and the few roofs give way to hundreds, each after the same fashion, and the single shop to a sprawling dozen.

And this was the way of the old house. They built a new one on the opposite side of the orchard, and transplanted the white lilac-bushes to a space alongside another weather-beaten fence. It grieved my childish heart to see the enchanted place go, but by this time my parents had moved into the city, and my only glimpses of the devastation were those of occasional week-end visits; being out of sight kept it in part out of mind.

At first, I could not love the new house. It had no memories; there were no Paradise trees. But here I became acquainted with the incomparably fascinating Frau Magdalena Geiger, the Bohemian or Bavarian peddler woman—I am not sure whether anybody ever knew from what untraveled place she had come—who appeared in my grand-

mother's kitchen at certain periods of the year and sold her soap, and pins, and blacking, and shoestrings. A gusty, elaborate creature, sun-scorched, wind-battered, with vivid eyes, with eloquent hands—which included earth and heaven in their gesture—and a tongue which neither powers nor principalities could have struck dumb. From the striped shawl on her head to the thick shoes on her feet she was a flash of color, a March wind pushing through the rooms, a wild seller of tame, familiar household wares, a territory in herself. She swore stout oaths; she shrilled all the gossip of the roads, from the toll-gate a half mile below, clean up the steep hill to the county town. Births, weddings, deaths, accidents and illnesses, frocks, dishes and victuals were told about and talked over, each with its special and copious details, and rendered startling by numerous ejaculations. *Sakrament,* but that youngest girl of the blacksmith's had an evil cough; and can you forget her two sisters died of a lung sickness one year after the other? Miss Henrietta Austin had just put down a new rag carpet in her sitting-room. The rags were her own and she had dyed them herself a red and a green. *Heilige Maria,* but that was a good-

looking carpet! The new-married couple next to the churchyard had ordered a sewing-machine, which Nichol's cart has to bring out the day after tomorrow. That would make sewing easy, to be sure. And women had it hard enough in this world. Was it not so, Frau Gabler? *Herr Jesus!*

And my grandmother, a little, plump, easy-going woman, with the blue eyes of her ancestry, sat there on the kitchen settle, and being human, listened, and being kind, listened with tolerance; and I, a small, wide-eyed, flaxen-haired figure, stood as near as I could possibly get to this petticoated Autolycus, and quaked at the expected profanity, and yet down in the deep of my primitive heart felt a sort of tumultuous awe, and joy, and delight in it.

None of us ever escape the first few years of our lives. They make a mould into which we are cast, and though it may be broken, and we be turned loose, some remnant of it, some intangible evil or lovely thing or both, will remain with us, like the odor to a flower, or the smoothness to a piece of ivory. It is part of the immortality of youth. To that old house and to the old man who was master of it, I owe the best of any fortune which

has ever befallen me. There was never much money; many of this world's goods I went without. But there were always daffodils in the grass in spring, and there were traditions, and books, and plain thinking, and direct speech, and dignity of life and work, and liberty to move about, and grow up in. And which of us can escape beauty, no matter in what guise or under what name it goes about?

The Ghosts

I heard a grave crack. Afterward
Across the lane,
The thorn-tree shook and shook
Like a rat in a rain.

Dusk. A star was out,
A piece of silver thinned
To such a point it would have split
At one breath of the wind.

The old thorn shook, shook like a rat
Shaking itself dry.
What ghost came there at dusk
To the ghost that was I?

Ghosts

HAVE you ever gone down a white birch road at twilight? It was the fall of the year, perhaps, and the leaves, still shaking on the lower boughs, were yellow and few. Beyond them stretched a sky that was like the gold in the cup of a crocus. The tall mullein stalks, on each side behind the fences, had put off their spare, leathery look, and changed to something most delicate and strange. Somewhere was the expectancy of spring; in the mist which began to creep toward you from the ends of the earth; in the bark of a dog; in the call of voices one to another, all as clear and separate as though in April. It was the ghosts' country.

On the borders of such a country we walked when we were children. For us there were signs and portents. The air shook; the waters thundered. The moon at the full was a shape of terror. When she set her round one eye to the window-pane, and discovered us deep in our pillows, we muffled our small

heads, and clung more closely together. For were there not wild, nameless things happening from one end of the dim, long York Road to the other?

And on other nights there was the Dark. My mother used to stand at the foot of the hall stairs with a candle in her hand, watching us move one by one slowly up toward the attic bedchamber. "Now don't be afraid, you're getting taken care of." I can see her yet, gray-eyed, smiling, a little impatient. "You're getting taken care of, getting taken care of"—said each creak of the stair. I knew she meant God. By the potency of that name I tried to stay the shaking of my heart. Up, up, past the square window set in the side of the wall. If I had looked, I would have seen the friendly, tall Paradise trees. "Care of—care of"—said the creaking stairs. Then the feel of the attic floor under my feet, and a plunge into a vast, still, black void. Presently the black turned into gray; the shapes of things—a trunk, a chair, a window—stood out misty, each in its place. I gulped my prayers down and tumbled with my sister into the huge wooden bed. No candle, no mother! Down in the living room sat my elders who were not afraid, with lights, and

laughter, and gossip, and here, with the hall and the parlor separating us from them, lay my sister and myself, alone, cast out to the roofless night. These were the deficiencies and cruel inequalities of a bewildering world.

The Dark was a greedy and appropriative thing. Would I find it fast and sound in the morning, where I had set it on the middle of the mantel-piece—a certain china mug, bestrewn with pink ragged-robins, and dear to my heart, the gift of a strangely appreciative cousin? Would my favorite doll, Betty, whom I loved so much that I tore her frocks for the sheer delight of mending them, be still staring mildly at me out of her flat blue eyes, from her particular corner of the parlor table, between a pile of hymn books and a red and gilded Friendship's Offering? I lay there longing for my simple treasures, as the naked longs for a cloak, the thirsty for a cup of water.

At the very end of the attic in the old house rose a broad chimney, and piercing it about half-way to the ceiling was a narrow wooden door. In the incalculably far-off times before my grandparents' ownership of the building, this part of the chimney had been used as a primitive sort of smoke house

for the curing of the fat hogs killed on the premises, and the door had served as an entrance. A door holds in itself the whole of every kind of mystery. It shuts out or shuts in all that can mar or make us. I tiptoed softly past this one, with an uneasy eye upon it. Between my sisters and me it raised a barrier, or so it seemed to us, to keep back all the hordes of the dark—creeping, flat-bellied, wicked-eyed, unblinking creatures, or quick, tall, flame-encircling ones—but each of them big with desire and devastating designs. To wake up in the middle of the night, and think of that door, was to think of stark terror itself.

On sunshiny days we manufactured small mud pies, hard, brown and incredibly gritty, and arranged them in a row under a hole which was let into the foundation of the old house. These were intended as an offering to the Demon—the fabulous creature who inhabited those funereal spaces behind the weather-worn cellar stones. Sometimes we each took turns, at calling down this fascinating aperture, darting for a terrible moment or two, back to the garden fence, where we clung, pale, silent, waiting for we knew not what. Growing bolder after a while, we

would creep softly forward, and squat down with our credulous ears at the hole. There was only silence, silence.

Opinion was divided as to the appearance of this demoniac being, the creation of our own raw and liberal imaginations. One of us pictured him as having horns, a short, thick, twisted body, a mouth that belched flames, and a tail reaching to the other side of the world. The rest of us rejected the tail, but fondly accepted the horns and the remainder of this startling anatomy.

If I found a horseshoe lying out on the pike, on my way to or from school I hailed it as a gift of the gods. It was more comforting—as far as its immediate promises of good luck went—than the catechism. If a spider, spinning his web overhead, swung down on a shining thread just before me, I looked for a holiday, or a new book, or an added coin to a seldom full purse. I had more faith in it than in the entire church service. If my frock turned up accidentally at the hem, and I spat vulgarly but effectively across that portion of it, my future was to resolve itself into that of kings. If one of my small, grubby hands became disfigured with a wart, I rubbed a piece of fat bacon

over the offending protuberance, and buried it under the drippings of the eaves; the wart in a day or two followed. But to make this remedy infallible, it was necessary to steal the bacon. Elders had a fashion of being ubiquitous. To stroll casually and with an innocent countenance, archangelical indeed, into our homely, spice-smelling kitchen, with its pot of rosemary on the sill, and abstract the needed bit of "lean and fat" was an undertaking which required the cunning of a politician and the courage of an apostle. If unsuccessful, it might entail upon the unlucky one the fate of the Amalekites.

Superstition in general among the more elementally inclined in the neighborhood, was narrowed down to certain specific matters. The first visitor to a house on New Year's Day must be a man; otherwise, ill fortune would settle upon it for the ensuing twelve months. A negro man would bring more luck than a white one. Sometimes a member of a family would bribe—with the good coin of the realm—a colored doer of odd jobs about the place, and he would leave his crowded shack on the New Year's morning, and present himself at the front entrance,

doubly to ensure the continuance of luck to this particular family.

There was also a curious unanimity of opinion in regard to the number thirteen. It was looked at askance. A certain lady in the county scrupulously arranged her dinner parties to within a reasonable distance of this uncanny number, but if, in spite of her foresight, some sudden mischance would bring it down to thirteen, she would hale in the figuratively halt, maimed and blind of the family in an endeavor to bring it up to fourteen. Friday, too, had its appropriate tag and label of doom. To cut out material on Friday for a new garment, and not finish it to the last hook and button, on the same day, was to say in unambiguous language to the owner of that garment: "You'll never live to wear it out." From personal experience I can vouch for the agony of indecision which assailed one at such moments. It was not merely the difference between an old and a new frock, but between something fixed, hereditary, and its raw and modern opposite. An ancient way is easier, and it usually resulted in choosing that.

There was much running to fortune tellers. I clearly remember the story told in connec-

tion with a middle-aged woman who lived far up the York Road. She came away from one of these smooth-talking individuals with a positive belief that she would become a widow in the immediate future. She accordingly, and within a few weeks, married off her oldest child—a daughter barely sixteen years of age—to a man much older, in order that at least one of her offspring would be provided for, and that there would be one mouth less at the lean table of her prospective widowhood. The strangeness of the whole matter was that she herself died long before her husband! I can see her plainly. She always wore a dull, starched muslin handkerchief fastened tightly around her head; the house she lived in was a long, narrow stone one, set on the extreme edge of the highway. A garden ran at the side and the back of the house, and whenever I think of that garden, I see it full of a certain crimson-colored stock or ragged robin, and of great clump after clump of stiff, wiry, prolific ribbon-grass.

But was there really more superstition in those days than in these flauntingly modern ones? It is a hard and delicate matter to apportion so much of a characteristic to one period and so much of it to another; to label

with a more or a less a yesterday or a to-day. It is likely that persons were more natural in their expression in regard to various happenings than they are now. Science had not yet overpowered them. They had not yet felt the clutch of mere facts. Science was a word seldom used. They knew something about astronomy and the tides, and the attraction of gravitation; they had had the salient facts pertaining to the weather hammered into their heads; the average man and woman possessed a good deal of stray common knowledge—as it might be called—but not enough to entitle either to be considered deeply educated.

I think there was more imagination, less to befuddle or stultify it. Overillustrated books, highly ritualistic church services, movies, pageants, and processions were unknown; people made their own pictures. Perhaps, therefore, they were more responsive on the side turned from the literal, usual affairs of life, more sensitive toward that which is intangible, mysterious. They knew much about human nature—as may be learned from the fiction of that day—but they did not label it psychology. They knew, also, that some of their neighbors were "dif-

ferent," but they were not conversant enough with scientific phraseology to call this difference "psychic." For instance, I had a beautiful aunt of whom it was reported that her dreams came true. More than one story in the family in regard to this reputed gift of hers, added to the romance of her personality. Once, when a small child living in Southern Germany, she dreamed a dream so intense and real, and vivid, that it followed her out of bed, and down stairs to her breakfast in the morning. She mentioned it to the family at the table.

"Tell us your dream," said one of her brothers. She told them that she had dreamed she was standing by her bedroom window, looking out into the orchard below. Two men had come in sight, under the apple trees, one carrying a spade, the other a bulky bundle of some kind. She had seen these two men halt under a certain tree, at the far end of the orchard, and the one with the spade stoop down and begin to dig. Then in her dream she had become suddenly confused, a thick mist had settled down upon her and blotted out everything. When she waked up afterwards she was trembling and frightened.

"I can show you the tree," she said, half crying.

"Come on," said her brother.

So the two children leading, and the rest of the family, sceptical, and merry, and excited, following, went out into the sunny Saxon orchard that far-off summer morning.

"There's the tree," said my aunt, pointing.

They hurried forward, and found in a cavity dug under the roots, heavily covered with matted leaves and soil, a sack bulging with money. This was handed over to the proper town authorities. Years after, my people discovered that the money had been hidden there by two robbers, who, expecting after a careful interval to return, had selected this lonely orchard as a secret and safe place in which to bury their spoils.

Another time this beautiful aunt dreamed that she was walking through a green but unfamiliar garden, in the middle of which stood a great gilded clock. Coming toward her through the gay-colored flower beds, yellow and scarlet and sea-blue in the sunlight, was a man moving slowly, with a halo around His head—the Son of Man, she told her sisters—Who beckoned to her and pointed with His finger at the gilded clock. The

number at which He pointed was forty-three. "It's a sign and a warning," she told them. She died at forty-three.

A woman once gave me an experience of her youth, when she had lived down the York Road near the toll-gate. A certain old man was in the habit of visiting a disabled friend of his at the precise hour of four every afternoon in the week. This punctual service went on for a long time; so punctual was it, that people almost began to think of this hour as a period from which to date or reckon certain small household affairs. Often when they heard that cane tap-tap-tapping on the brick flags of the garden walk one would say to the other: "Now it's time for us to go and set the kitchen clock."

This woman told me that one summer afternoon she had heard the cane make its accustomed steady clicking sound out in the road, and then the gate open and close as usual. She had heard the cane go tap-tap-tapping up the garden path. A few hours later the news of the old man's death—early that morning—had reached her. Yet she was absolutely convinced that if she had looked out, she would have seen the old gentleman in his Sunday garb, a benevolent

figure, a little stooped, spectacled, gray-headed, paying his kind, daily visit to his crippled friend.

"Oh, why didn't you look out!" I used to cry to her. "Why *didn't* you look out!"

Such elemental stories as these were wedged here and there as tightly as its own hearthstones in the obscure little village, and helped to make its life pictorial. People could not cross their thresholds without tumbling into mystery; they came back to these again and again. But now dreams, premonitions, ghost-tales, and the like are collected, sorted out, set in groups, and heaped in formidable cabinets, each group marked with its own particular psychic label. They are split into pieces, ground into the finest powder, and the atoms examined with superflous patience, in order to prove that they—along with the rest of life—are explainable. The consequence is that a great number of people flee as for their lives to the reading of detective and adventure stories, in order to forget for awhile this fury of standardization. Better the bloodiest murder or the most fabulously impossible happening than a desert world without the sign of an oasis or a well shadowed by a palm-tree. In the sixties there were still ancestral

phantoms. Facts were not confused with truths; nor was human experience considered a matter for the arithmetician.

The whole of this section of Baltimore county was wealthy with old stories, told and retold, until to the narrator their characters became almost as genuine as the men and women with whom he associated each day. The first Jerome Bonaparte had not been an unfamiliar figure several generations before. Occasionally and nearer to our time, the second Jerome, passing in his carriage, had added the romance of his name to the York Road. Traditions persisted; the ghost of Betsy Patterson still walked in the gentle country air. A mile across Waverly rose the village of Homestead, not much more than a largish hamlet, but already ambitious with a project of smoothing out its wagon-tracks into streets, each pretentious with the name of some dead president of the United States—Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Polk, Taylor. At its edge stood the great Patterson Mansion, a white-plastered house, of many windows, of gabled roofs, and broad, sloping lawns, shadowy with aged trees.

Early one summer afternoon my mother gathered her flock of three small girls around

her, arrayed each in a stiffly starched muslin frock and Sunday shoes, and started off for a visit across the fields to an old lady who lived in quaint Homestead. She marshaled us out of the house and through the yard, and across the orchard to the Old York Road, lying hot, dusty, and abandoned under the July sun. We walked slowly along, we three in front, picking our way solemnly through the tufts of grass on the sides, and feeling rather uneasy under the pinching of our best shoes. Our mother came behind, in her lilac-colored lawn, thick with white roses as big as a dime, and carrying a parasol over her head. A silent procession of four, on a long, parched afternoon in July, going a-visiting. We youngsters meticulously considered the matter from all angles. It was hot weather—this was apparent—and our shoes hurt us—this also was true—and the old lady on whom we intended to bestow our lively company, was not a lover of our three boisterous selves. Report held that she had predicted of at least one of us a violent and sudden death. No doubt we would be obliged to sit on the edge of purgatorial wooden chairs, and listen to dreary discourse about infinitesimally unimportant affairs, like the rains, and the

vegetables in the gardens, and the rude manners of the neighbors, and that her daughter Mary had the headache every day in the week. We would be handed glasses of buttermilk to drink, which, acting under the instructions of the entire family, we must take in minute, delicate sips, and not in our usual quick, indecorous fashion, of two or three gulps, by which we expedited our escape to our play outdoors. It was possible, however, that something different might happen.

And behold, something did! Directly ahead of us, leaning on a weather-blackened fence, stood Elijah Eames, in the glare and the flare of the sun, staring fixedly straight before him. One of the terrors of our brief lives was this poor gentleman. We were not allowed by our elders to use the word "crazy" because it might hurt someone's feelings and to hurt unless it was an obligation to do so—as witness the giving of castor oil and the incidental holding of noses—was barbarously impolite. We considered this the slimmest of casuistries, and behind their backs and in our secret thoughts, always called this demented neighbor by the name by which our raw masculine cousins called him, and that was "Crazy Lije." And there he stood im-

mediately in front of us, dark-featured, motionless, silent, and staring, staring. We sidled back to our mother, and took hold of her lilac skirts. She walked placidly on. No sound except that of our footsteps in the red dust of the Old York Road. And still he stared, stared straight before him. Now we were almost past the Hanson house, where my mother had gone to school when she was a little girl. And now the Homers' with its fierce black curly dog. No sound but that of our own footsteps. There were no people in the whole world except our four sacred selves. It seemed a cruelly interminable period of time before we had left that dark figure behind, in the glare and the flare of the sun, and staring fixedly straight ahead. Then at last we went back again to picking our way along the tufts of grass. And presently there was Tinges Lane, and we had turned into it, and come to the field which separated Waverly village from the village of Homestead. There was no gate; the only way in which we could reach our desired goal was by climbing the fence. My mother dropped her parasol deftly over the rails, gathered her lawn skirts in one capable hand, and let herself delicately down on the other side. The three of us scrambled

up after her, straddled the top bar, and considered the momentous question as to whether we should follow our mother's example, and descend, bar by bar, as by the steps of a ladder, or standing on the top one, make a glorious and perhaps perilous jump to the ground below. We decided on the latter, and landed in a swirl and whirl of lace-trimmed petticoats, with bruised knees and our hats at a most hilarious angle on our heads. Our mother straightened out our petticoats, looked at our knees, and mentioned prospective applications of lily leaves and whiskey—our grandmother's bottled-up remedy for all cuts and scrapings of the skin—and tilted our hats over our eyes, all the while scolding gently. We were not behaving like ladies. Everybody would be ashamed of us. It was necessary that we should reach our journey's end sound in mind and body, and with the proper amount of clean clothes about us to prove ourselves christened children and not savages. We set out again, we three small ones smelling of mullein, and yarrow, and mint, and other country things, the result of our tumble, and a matter of abounding delight to ourselves. We had done our one wild turn for the day. It was not long before we

had crossed the field, vacant from end to end, climbed the second fence—this time under the supervision of our mother—and were walking along the main street toward the house of old Mrs. Maginnis. It was a white house with a white fence inclosing it. This is all I can recall in regard to our visit—a dazzling white of house and fence, and as dazzling a green of trees and garden. A picture in two colors only, with a file of quacking ducks waddling across the middle of a flat meadow.

But all about lay the Patterson country. At the end of that flat meadow, the ground stretched upward and southward, and on its edge rose the Patterson house behind its great trees, windows and chimney and gable smoothly defined in the July afternoon, each a separate thing in a certain clarity of atmosphere, in which also lay the meagre village below. I wonder whether my mother gave it a thought? If she did, she would have remembered young Elizabeth Patterson, the haughty, handsome, tantalizing, ambitious Elizabeth, still alive at that time, an old woman, as haughty and as ambitious as ever, but embittered, shrewish of tongue, and developing surely into an unlovely miser. My mother's imagination—for she was an imagi-

native woman—would have struck off picture after picture of scenes once taking place within the bounds of those green historic acres—of glossy coaches rolling, with crack of whip and pound of hoofs, down the lane which led to the village; of gay men and women crowding the high, dignified rooms; of lovers in the dusk, and a few stars out, and the candlelight beginning to gleam behind the nine front windows. The shrewd, just father, the proud, bright-eyed daughter, and her profligate husband would have made three absorbing figures in one of those pictures. She would have recalled the entire story: that father's opposition to the marriage; the girl's headlong determination to make such an alliance; the Bonaparte repudiation of the presumptuous American matrimonial adventure. A singularly captivating story of beauty, and wealth, and power, of lessening fortunes, and disillusionment, and acrid old age. Poor Betsey Patterson! Most certainly the ghost of her girlhood went slipping by through the still air of that hot afternoon. My mother would have seen, if she had thought to look up, the red brick walls of the Patterson burying ground, making a distinct square of solid color against the tall

green of the woods directly behind it. For years they had stood there within sight of the nine front windows of the noble house. And within them lay the hushed, once dominant Pattersons, in the quiet of those rural levels, away from the change and chance of a disappointing world, and in "the reasonable hope" —to quote the words of a very lovely old book—of a blessed awakening.

But the sun was pushing down to the west, and our company of four must start on its homeward way. We set out again. And again, three of us smelling of mullein, and yarrow, and mint, and other aromatic growing things, we climbed the first fence, and crossed the deserted field in silence, and came to the second fence.

"Mother," said the youngest of us all, her legs a-straddle the top railing, "let's go the other way."

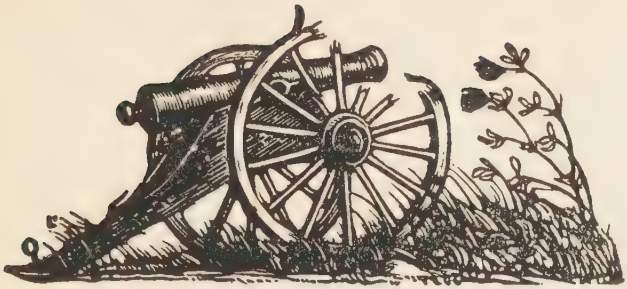
My mother finished depositing her parasol on the opposite side of the fence.

"Why?" she asked.

Then my twin answered: "'Cause she's afraid of Lige."

"So are you," said the youngest.

"Well, we'll go the big road, honey," said my easy-going mother. "But it's longer!"



Lament

What is Sorrow like?
Does she wear a crown?
Is her voice broken into sobs
That haunt you up and down?
Is she spent with wandering
From rainy town to town?

Out beyond the Autumn bough,
See her come and pass,
Hooded in the silver mist,
Through the sodden grass:
See you not your own sad heart
There as in a glass?

War

AGAIN a gray earth, a gray sky. A narrow path running along the edge of a field. Halfway down this path stood a short, crooked tree, a peach tree, indeed, that, to the small girl coming down the track was like the fig mentioned in the gospels which our Lord had cursed, for never in the whole of her brief life had it borne either flower or fruit.

There was the gritty creak of wheels in the highway beyond. The child looked, and saw a long, strange, slow-moving wagon, as gray as the weather itself, crawling up the straight and empty York Road. The child—it was myself—felt dimly that here was something different from anything else in the world. She began to remember that she was alone. Gray earth, gray sky, gray wagon. All at once, in a cold, dreadful, headlong fright, she left the crooked tree behind, and ran precipitately down toward the old house, bursting, a moment later, into the living room—where sat the women of the family sewing—with a

breathless explanation of what she had seen and heard. There was a silence when she had finished speaking. Then someone said, in a pitying voice: "I suppose it's poor Mr. Willy, who they're bringing home through the battle-lines to be buried. They bury in St. Paul's churchyard in town."

The child stood and stared at them.

"Yes, that must be it," said another.

And then they fell to whispering, whispering.

These were the times when my small sisters and myself were afraid to go to bed at night. The romance and the sharper tragedy of war were everywhere about us. Down the pike-road was quartered a company of blue-coated soldiers, within sound of a call from our front gate. A mile farther up the highway, or two miles, or a hundred, or a thousand—for rumor was wildly unsettled in regard to the matter—were Harry Gilmor and his gray-coated raiders. Any hour they might dash down upon us to harry and destroy, and be off and away to wreak the like fortune on Baltimore town. Between the blue forces and the gray we were ground between two mill-stones of terror. Hushed, unexplained things were going on in the old house. In the huge

walnut wardrobe downstairs in the hall was hidden a portrait of General Beauregard. At night a cousin made fine, tiny scarlet and white ribbon flags to be pinned securely in the top of one's most secret undergarments. "Northern," "Southern," "Union," "Confederate," were the words which beat luridly back and forth in the air. "Yankee" was another, and we children considered this the hierarchic name for the devil; but "black republican" was even worse; it was far and beyond the worst of all, for this was an equivalent for ten devils, each with his particular brand of flame and brimstone, rolled into one. And always our elders kept on whispering, whispering. One of them, an aunt, a small, auburn-haired, lively woman, with an audacious will, had made, in company with another lady in the neighborhood, of like political affiliations, a daring attempt to get through the lines, with certain needful articles for their friends on the other side. Loaded down with petticoats—part of their intended contribution toward the repletion of sundry female Confederate wardrobes, and also with a score of tightly wrapped, curious packages disposed in unexpected places about their persons, they had dared and succeeded.

Even now I can remember—caught up from the half-heard stealthy telling—the principal details of the picture—the dark night, the ramshackle boat, the river, and the silent, scared negro to row them across.

My grandfather was a fervid statesrights man, but his family, as was frequently the case at that period, in Maryland, was divided against itself. One of my uncles was a soldier on the Federal side; a son-in-law, my father, on the Confederate; another son-in-law was an obstinate abolitionist.

A fearless man, of plain and resolute speech, was my grandfather. No doubt there lived more than one in that seething rural community only too eager to carry any word of his to the proper authorities. The result was that on a wind-riddled, starless night the officials in charge of the military affair despatched their blue-coated soldiers to arrest and imprison him. But the night, as I say, was starless, the lanes many and twisting; they took the wrong turn and at a late hour stumbled upon the residence of my abolitionist uncle instead of that of his suspected father-in-law. From the second-story window of his house this night-shirted heretical relative held a parley with the soldiers.

"Why, boys, the old gentleman has a son in the Union Army," he said, in his wheedling, authoritative voice. Presently, they tramped away again into the wind-riddled weather.

This was only one of several cases of suspicion in our country settlement, some to end, as had my grandfather's, in dismissal, but far more frequently with a long or a brief imprisonment in Fortress Monroe. Neighbor looked askance at neighbor. The intimate intercourse between them began to change into safe talk about the rain, or the sun, or sick relatives, or the crops on the outlying farms. Politics, which had been fearlessly public, became an entirely private affair, to be discussed behind drawn curtains and well-locked doors.

Yet there was one topic which received a unanimous opinion from them all, and this was the topic of slavery. To a man—or so it appears to me in looking back—the community was against it. Theoretically, no doubt, for there were no slaves in the immediate neighborhood. Two or three free negroes, living in a clapboard shack on the edge of a field along the high road, as many more with a swarm of children in a rose-covered cottage at the turning of a lane, or the servants of the

richer families in the county comprised practically all they saw or heard of the racial matter, which had set the country raging, and brothers to slaughtering brothers.

Eli—old Eli—old black Eli—as everybody called him—was indisputably a character. He was the butler in a family which lived somewhat to the side of our village in a large, square, drab-painted brick house, with columned porches, set down in a great box-encircled garden. Eli had the fine, grave, careful manners of the black house-servant of that day, patterned after those of the people he so efficiently served. He had the air of a university dean in a Commencement Day procession. With a look out of a severe black eye he shamed any breach of etiquette or other misdemeanor. He is not yet forgotten, and neither is the great, sweet, half-lit old garden, where the lilies-of-the-valley grew so white and spicy in mid-April weather. And how those box-hedges smelled after a shower, when they shone, dripping black and silver behind the high fences! You could sniff them an appreciable distance down the pool-filled road.

There came at this time a sudden black rumor, gathering in weight as it came, which

struck like a knife into the heart of the country-side. It flew from lip to lip. Farmers in their wagons plodding to town with their April wares behind them stopped their rattling progress to talk it over with the men breaking stone on the side of the pike. Keepers of lonely shops leaned over their counters and nodded it stealthily to their inquiring customers. Neighbors stood in their doorways or on the corners of budding lanes and half-whispered it to one another. But fast upon it came the blacker fact, the fact of the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln.

My branch of the family had lately moved from their rural acres into an ample old house, standing on North Gay Street, Baltimore City, in a section which was rapidly eliminating its one-time drowse and quiet, and resolving itself into the noise and bustle of buying and selling, and rows of small, lively shops.

Martial law was proclaimed. Gloom settled upon the town. In this gloom we walked; we ate, and supped in it. Black-draped flags hung from the windows. The shops closed early. People went about in a strange, unfriendly fashion. They were hushed, bewildered, suspicious, fearful.

One night, toward twelve o'clock, within two or three days after the tragedy, my mother lay awake and alone, except for her children, in the front chamber of the new house. Everything was dark, vast, void. She was afraid. But presently she heard far-off, and thinned into a shadowy thread by the distance, the sound as of someone singing. It drew nearer and nearer. There was a footfall on the pavement, a man's voice raised sturdily in the words of a familiar and comforting hymn. Still nearer.

"Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear," sang this stranger at twelve of the clock that April midnight.

"It is not night if thou be near," he sang.

The steps passed; the music thinned out again into a shadowy thread. Silence.

"I couldn't feel afraid after that," said my mother simply, in telling us about it afterward.

Not many days after the assassination of President Lincoln, his funeral procession moved somberly through the principal streets of Baltimore, toward its ultimate destination in Springfield, Illinois. Through the uncertain April weather it trailed along North Gay Street, between silent, closed houses, half-

masted flags, and crowds of silent, awed spectators, pushed close to the edge of the pavements. My sister and myself and other small people of the neighborhood, as big-eyed and hushed as our elders, watched it from behind the palings of our high front gate. Death was not an altogether unfamiliar matter to us. An aunt perhaps, or an uncle, or a child out of some household, had gone away, and become, in the going, a Presence, fair, distant, enwrapped in mist. This was different. Here was a vast gloom and solemnity, the rumble of wheels, the mass of soldiers, each caught in the rise and fall of melancholy music, here all the bewildering pomp of not only grief, but war. Through the windows of the elaborate hearse could be seen a long, dark coffin. Four horses, strange with nodding black plumes on their heads, drew the sad vehicle. No one spoke. No one stirred. Then all was over.

"Sophy," piped up one of our small company at the gate to my sister, "that's the kind of coffin I'm going to get for my mother."

Down the street from this ample old house stood a stationer's shop, its two windows crammed with slates, copy-books, chalks, inks, and pencils wrapped in sheaths of flaring

red, white and blue. At the door, attached to a slender wooden frame, hung the illustrated weekly papers. I haunted the neighborhood of this shop, for these pictures drew and held me. I read out the portentous matter stretched in large type across the top of the first page. Once, sprawled in the centre, there was a high, black, horrible thing called a gallows. I read, or rather gorged myself full of every word, every detail; the tall, greedy headlines, the tragic, unfamiliar names —Surratt, Payne, Herold, Atzerodt, John Wilkes Booth—the long, meticulous paragraphs of these end-of-the-war newspapers. They followed me back home along the strangely hushed street, and under the black-draped flags, and seized upon my dreams at night. I doubt whether many of my elders knew more about the public expression, the recorded data of that dreadful fourteenth of April, 1865, than did I. It was unwholesome food for a young and imaginative child, this continuous and nerve-tearing acquaintance with criminal literature, but my mother was a very busy woman at this time, and many close-at-hand matters escaped her notice, and besides, with the curious secretiveness of youth I could never have brought my-

self to tell her. So I kept on reading and suffering.

I think that one of the first things at that time which would have attracted the attention of a stranger in the United States—especially in the South—was the number of women in mourning garments. They were seen at church, in market, in the streets, in the shops. It was the custom, Victorian perhaps, and in some instances deteriorating into mere fashion, for the women of a family to put on black garments for those near enough in blood to warrant this token of respect. But the funereal garb of this period, and for several years after, signified not only personal grief and loss, but much more indeed; it symbolized an ended dream, a destroyed cause; it meant blood, four years of hot enmity, devastation; it meant Bull Run, Shiloh, Chancellorsville, Appomattox, Gettysburg.

There was much bitterness. I am speaking of Maryland only, and out of the blurred memories of talks amongst my elders; as a child I had escaped any political opinion in regard to matters. There was no hard feeling, as I remember, against Abraham Lincoln. I judge that it was just beginning to be recognized even in those early days, that his

attitude had been one of kindliness toward his late opponents; that had he lived his statesmanship would have kept the South from the worst impositions and infamies of the carpet-bag, the so-called reconstruction period. But there was impoverishment everywhere; in my own immediate family a pitiful husbanding of resources; in some of the country districts east and south almost a hand-to-mouth existence; slaves were gone; their discarded masters land-poor; the flower of the flock swept into a too early grave. People therefore were naturally and honestly bitter. They could not forget; it was impossible for them to forgive.

And echoes lingered. There was still left an appreciable number of irreconcilables, or as they properly called themselves, "unreconstructed rebels"; these, with the other surviving Confederates, formed themselves into societies, and there they garnered up the dash, the romance, the color, the glory, of the defeated cause. The Methodist and Presbyterian churches, by their division into Northern and Southern, brought about by the war, were a reminder of those years of difference of opinion, those four years of flame and sacrifice. Once, picking up a prayer-book in a rural

church, I came across the collect for the President of the United States changed by a deliberate lead-pencil into that for the President of the Confederate States. Heart-breaking stories were told. I used to pore and wonder over a certain print—a steel engraving—which was frequently shown, as affairs grew more settled, in the important picture shops in Baltimore. Its title was "The Burial of Latané," and it represented a lately dug grave, a gray-headed negro standing beside on his just-used spade, and a gentle-faced woman reading from a book in her hand the solemn words of the funeral service. Two or three women stood in the background. The burial was that of Captain William Latané, a Virginia soldier under the command of the intrepid cavalry leader, General J. E. B. Stuart. He was killed in the bold and fortunate attempt of the latter to make a reconnaissance between the Pamunkey and Chickahominy rivers in order to ascertain the exact position of the right wing of the Federal Army under the leadership of General McClellan. "Having successfully accomplished its object," says General Robert E. Lee, in writing of it afterwards, "the expedition crossed the Chickahominy almost in the presence of the enemy,

with the same coolness and address that had marked every step of the progress, and with the loss of but one man, the lamented Captain Latané, of the Ninth Virginia Cavalry, who fell leading a successful charge against a force of the enemy."

The body of the fallen officer was deposited in a cart and carried to Westwood, a plantation about two miles from the scene of his death. "This dear young soldier, so precious to many hearts, now in the hands of sorrowing, sympathizing friends, yet personally strangers to him!" reads a diary kept by one of the Westwood ladies at that period. Then later: "We cut off a large lock of his hair, the only thing we could do for his mother." Again: "We have sent for Mr. Carraway to perform the funeral service." Again: "Aaron, whom we sent for Mr. Carraway, was not allowed to pass the picket post, so we took the body of our poor young captain, and buried it ourselves in the Summer Hill graveyard."

The ladies in the picture are not those who took part in the original affecting ceremony, but some of the Richmond belles who posed for the artist, William D. Washington. Uncounted copies of it were sold in all sections

of the South; even now you hear of it in unexpected places. A Rhodes scholar, recently visiting at Cliveden, the home of Lady Astor, saw it hanging in one of her big, hospitable rooms. The story filtered down into the war poetry of the day. Sings one sensitive and fervid poet in the *Southern Literary Messenger:*

"Let us not weep for him whose deeds endure;
So young, so beautiful, so brave, he died
As he had wished to die—the past is sure!"

Beauregard, Stonewall Jackson! These were the two names which fastened themselves upon the deepest and the earliest of my childish memories. I have no distinct recollection of hearing any mention of General Robert E. Lee until the apparent maturity of my teens. It may be that the circumstance of the young men in the neighborhood of the old house, having volunteered under the first of these commanders, had given him a hold upon us, an intimacy which was almost personal. Stonewall Jackson's untimely death had turned him into one of the pictorial figures of the day, and attached a kind of immortality to the merest detail in regard to

him. I think perhaps that General Lee's fame, especially in Maryland, was slower in coming to him; it was a steady, almost deliberate, yet assured growth. I feel fairly certain that in the late sixties or early seventies the acclamation of him as one of the greatest commanders in the history of the world was only nebulous, if it were anything at all. It may be that General Lee's instant acceptance of the terms of surrender, by taking the oath of allegiance, was not pleasing to the rigid secessionists. For, if my memory serves me aright for Maryland, he had not yet become, by the dignity of his life, his definite statesmanship, and his genius as a soldier, the heart-melting, indomitable, world-wide character of the last fifty years.

Baltimore is congenitally Democratic in politics. But, during the Civil War and for some time afterward, its political majority was held by the war-born or Republican party. Eventually the federal arm was shortened; suspicion and recrimination slowly crumbled; conditions everywhere became more natural, and the ancient town swung back to its traditional party affiliation, and showed its latent sympathy for the Confederacy by the appointment of Confederates or their nearest

relations to local official positions. One of my teachers in the high school—an instructor in mathematics—had refused to take the oath to the government, and, debarred from any important assignment, had earned a frugal subsistence out of one obscure country school after the other, and this only in those sections which were strongly Southern. Another teacher, a fiery Irish woman, but employed in a different position, had been arrested and escorted through the streets and before the military authorities for using high-spirited language—officially treasonable—to a Union soldier whom she had considered impertinent. With what awe I looked upon these women! Two of the superintendents of public instruction were gentlemen who had been officers in the Confederate Army.

Out of the many confused and confusing recollections concerning this period, there are a few which thrust themselves out insistently from the others. One morning the Baltimore newspapers announced that on that day the body of John Wilkes Booth would be brought from the Washington Arsenal and interred in the Booth family lot in Greenmount Cemetery. It was February 18, 1869. Spring was in the air, the weather clear, yet

a trifle hazy. From the windows of our house on the Harford Road where we then lived, I could see the stone walls of the cemetery. Every time the thought of the matter—and that was often—came into my mind, I felt as if something sinister, weird, and yet incredibly pathetic were happening. Long after—years after, and on another spring day—I paid a visit to that green, well-kept space in a public graveyard. A workman, employed by the cemetery company, a talkative, intelligent, leisurely man, constituted himself my guide and historian.

"The grave's just there under his father's—Junius Booth. Just there," he said pointing. "You see it ain't mounded; just flat, and there ain't no stone. They were afraid some folks would mind it." He considered a little. "And maybe they wanted everything forgotten."

One afternoon I had occasion to pay a business visit to Professor William S. Tonry, a widely known chemist, and at that time a commissioner of public schools in Baltimore. Tired out with my day's teaching, I sat listening to what he felt incumbent upon himself and his position to tell me. Presently a slender, brown-haired, still-looking woman

came into the room, crossed it and went out again. I knew at once, either from some word of the professor's, or else by mere but certain intuition, that this lady was his wife. I knew that she was Anna, the daughter of the unfortunate Mary Surratt, who had been drawn—unwittingly, it is now generally believed—into the tragedy of Abraham Lincoln's death, and publicly executed. All at once I remembered the story told of this daughter's desperate going from official to official each as inexorably unresponsive as the other—a swift, heart-wrecking agony of adventure—in an unavailing effort to save her mother's life. I saw myself a small, frightened child, standing in front of an ancient stationer's shop on North Gay Street, and devouring the tall, greedy headlines stretched across the weekly newspapers. I read again the tragic, unfamiliar names—Surratt, Payne, Herold, Atzerodt, John Wilkes Booth. Again that black, high, horrible thing called a gallows. I saw myself slipping home under the crêpe-draped flags, and through the strangely hushed street, to dream about all of these things in the dark, oncoming night.

Apricot Trees in Bloom

Impoverished I came
Where apricot trees blew by a wall,
Striking a silver flame
Beyond the deserted grass.
I could not pass:
I shook with laughter.
Here was I fed;
Here was my bread
Until the grave and after.

The Orchard

KNOW you where you are?" asks Oliver of Orlando in "As You Like It." "Oh, sir, very well: here in your orchard," answers Orlando.

Says Shallow down in Gloucestershire to that ranting baronet Jack Falstaff, "You shall see mine orchard, where, in an arbor, we will eat a last year's pippin of my own graffing, with a dish of caraways, and so forth."

The porter tells the messenger to the great Earl of Northumberland that

"His lordship is walked forth into the orchard;
Please it your honor knock but at the gate,
And he himself will answer."

The earl comes out from under the apple-trees to hear of the tide of battle, of victory, then of defeat, and eventually of the death of his fiery son.

And what lover can ever put out of his

memory the orchard of the noble family of Capulet?

Thus Shakespeare, whose heart is always Warwickward and therefore always countryward, brings the orchard into some five or six of his plays, incidentally, as he must, and as he brings in a street, or a tower, or a bedchamber. It is a part of the usual custom and equipment of the time, and nothing more. Even Marvell, much later, in his garden in Nunappleton, sees it only as a fair addition to the fairer whole.

> "What wondrous life is this I lead!
> Ripe apples drop about my head
> * * * * * *
> The nectarine and curious peach
> Into my hands themselves do reach."

For it is probable that the orchard as we have it now, acre after acre of inclosed land, entirely given up to the rearing of fruit alone, was unfamiliar, because unknown, to our ancestors of, say, two hundred years ago. It was part garden, part a lawn-like plot, with an occasional row of trees standing in the grass, or else with their boughs trained and trailing over stone or brick walls, while

everywhere about stretched well-ordered beds of prosperous vegetables, and gay and hardy flowers.

Yet the orchard in itself is well worth the pains of the poet, for, although not so open as the lane, or so secret as the wood, it keeps the free heart of the one, and somewhat of the privileged quiet of the other. It is the first to have prescience of the spring. Bare, alone, a little tremulous about the lips, up to its thighs in a thin, shifting mist, it waits through the neutral February weather, and presently through the longer and gusty March one, for its yearly due of bloom, and leaf, and odor. The trickling of many little waters is heard. The first week in April it turns white from head to foot, and pink as the tip of a cloud at sunset after a small rain. And of a June afternoon it is as full of color as it was five or six weeks before. The tempered green of the leaves, the grayish-brown of the trunks, the gnarled black of the fence railings are there. Straggling in from the lane-side shows a clump of blossoming carrot, a hand's length of lace spread out to bleach. It is too early yet for the fruit to add more than a scrap of red to the prevailing tints. Its bees thin out to a blundering two or three,

its grass to the high blades of the shriveling autumn. And all at once a second flowering appears, a few tentative petals on the end of a limb, and in a day or so are gone. All its ancient flavors now are come back to the surface again—the housewifely smell of the mould and the harvested apples, and the smack of the trees themselves. It drips with odor as with old wine.

At dusk, any time of the year, stretched out against a west of honeysuckle-yellow, it has the effect of medieval carving. There is a grave loveliness about it then that makes you think of a strain of music coming out of a half-closed door. It is as full of secrets as an old house. All the intimacy of the daylight has gone. It is thick with ghosts. You can readily imagine the lessened splendor of dreams gone by. And yet what phantom is fair enough to wander down the corridors of an old country orchard?

This description of the orchard in general applies in every particular to the one which I knew and loved as a child, an Elysian couple of acres that lay between the York Road and the Old York Road many years ago. It was playground, closet, sanctuary, a stage from which the bustling businesses of life could be

seen and kept in mind. The county and its affairs swept by. In the grey of the early morning the market-carts went past, with a vigorous rumble, weighted with the green stuffs from the farms farther up the pike. My sister and I, playing in the orchard, saw them rumble back again, more easily than before, with a rattle of cans and thudding of boxes, somewhere between noon and sunset. Sometimes two of them abreast, their weather-ruddy occupants gossiping in strained, boisterous voices each to the other, came last of all. We somehow liked the sound of the voices, and the added noise of the empty cans and boxes; these all seemed in a confused but definite way to connect us with our elders, and with their buying and selling, and so with the traffic of a brisk and distant world. The doctor in his buggy, the best-known vehicle in the country-side—a queer combination of rain-streaked wood and cracked, dusty leather—plodded into sight. We never quite reached a settled conclusion in regard to this disconcerting gentleman. That his doses were bitter, and his eye almost unbelievably sharp, and that once he had announced his opinion of the tallest of us in what she and the other two of us considered most insulting and un-

appreciative language, we agreed; of his value as a physician and his worth as a man we knew only what our befuddled relatives openly expressed; it meant, as far as we were concerned, nothing at all. We were too immature, too deep down in the formative period of our lives to have any understanding of this gallant person; if it had been so, then even his rickety buggy would have been of a sacred interest to us, for it would have taken on the look of a chariot, bedecked with plumes and banners, which bore about the victor in many a stirring, long, unequal fight.

Twice daily the omnibus rolled on its way. Occasionally a huge wagon, stacked to the top with hay, and pulled by four horses, lurched heavily townward. Once in a while the two leading horses wore red cloth-bound hoops over their heads, from which jangled a string of bells; and this sound, or series of sounds, seemed to incorporate in themselves the whole of the sunny levels from which this steep yellowish load had been despatched; they took along with them the very core and essence of unknown roads miles away. From behind the hedge of osage orange bushes growing thick and glossy-leaved in a corner of the orchard nearest to the house, we used to stare

rather wistfully at such wagons, for they represented to us that famed and fabulous region called "up the country," to which one of our cousins departed for a visit at midsummer of each year, coming back plumper and rosier and with a noticeable access of airs. Perhaps she even had a touch of what our household called the "Pennsylvania twang." But by reason of her being a traveler, she was worth an added respect, and although in the main we counted geography a matter of supererogation, at these times we were fiercely inquisitive in regard to the place where people's voices went up instead of down, and where everybody appeared to be engaged in an unholy contest of scrubbing.

But at certain times of the year, and always after nightfall, a different set of people, dark, vivid, barbaric folks, with a dash and flash of scarlet and yellow, and the easy, dominant swagger, as though of the race of the wind, which belongs to those who live in camps, trailed past our beloved orchard. These were the gypsies on their annual return to Frisby's Woods, a stout mile from the village tollgate, and here they pitched their tents, and cooked their meals, and waited to tell fortunes to the town near at hand or to the peo-

ple in the scattered houses in the adjacent country. If it were apple-time when they passed, we waked up in the morning to find our stock of fruit appreciably lessened. But it was not this unimportant fact to us youngsters, which troubled my twin sister and myself from the hour when the first rumor of the gypsies reached us; it was the secret fear that they would carry off our young sister, who was a daring, belligerent small creature, of the type, or so we thought, which would make an appreciative Romany an eager and instant kidnapper. Otherwise these gusty and swaggering people were the source of an unbelievable happiness to us. On Sunday afternoons the black-haired women, one flash of color from head to foot, used to bring their black-haired babies up to Saint John's Church to be baptized, and on these occasions one of my relatives officiated as godmother. Then indeed was our cup full. No doubt, in that curious, half-formed process which children call thinking, we three considered this a subtle alliance between our ordered household and the shifting ones of these robust and starry wayfarers; by the words of the ancient ceremony it was as though we had been made of one blood, and were therefore kin.

For the villagers to walk down the York Road in the diminishing yellow light after sunset, and come upon the gypsy camp at Frisby's Woods, was to venture into a different and disquieting world. They crossed the strip of dusty highway, and behold—scarlet and gold and the jangling of bells. Savors of meat cooking over leaping wood fires; delicate, thinly blue smoke streaming up to the tree-tops, and out to the mellowed air beyond. It there were any blood of the rover in any one of them, up it rose to lure and to hurt. To have their fortune told, became as natural a thing as the eating of a meal. To hold out their hands, and hear a mumble of words and the clink of coin afterwards, and to rise up with a sense of dread or elation, when the mumble was over, was all part of an old cousinly game a little tarnished by disuse, perhaps, but as primarily effective as ever.

Just where the orchard met the narrow stretch of pasture set apart for the sustenance and outdoor quarters of our two cows, there arose out of the grass certain small hillocks no higher than a hand, and reaching from fence to fence. They looked like graves. And this we called them. Prosaically they were no doubt the worked-over ground left from a

far-off ploughing before the planting of the apple trees; but to us they suggested so forcibly the sacred hillocks in Saint John's churchyard that our imaginations easily adjusted themselves to the situation, and graves they remained. Sometimes we dug down with a blunt instrument an inch or two in the yielding soil, and buried a dead butterfly which we had found. At other times we set up chipped-off pieces of board in imitation of tombstones, but to whom or to what we never told. I wonder whether any psychologist will ever touch upon even the edge of a child's imaginings. I think not; I hope not. Did we really believe in these grassy up-risings under the orchard-trees or did we not? How much of it was a game, and how much of it a very vivid reality? There is a crystal transparency about a child's cerebral processes up to a certain point, but beyond that an inexorable congenital sensitiveness; he is dumb to all response. I remember that I felt a vague solemnity whenever I looked down upon these diminutive swellings in the grass, a sort of rainy regret, the minor note in the fortunate happenings of the summer. It may have been also a prescience of the sadness which permeates the universe, and the common lot of

women and men. Children love the minor note in story and poem, and these graves interpreted it most effectively.

But all my time was not devoted to burying dead butterflies in shallow and appropriate tombs. I ran races with my sisters under the apple-boughs, climbed trees, swung from the branches of the great weeping willow growing at the very end of the orchard and crooked over the ditch which was dug alongside the road. There was something of the devil about this great tree. No sooner had I set foot in the orchard, when it appeared to draw me toward it with the promise of the kingdoms of the world, if I would only mount the fence, seize its hanging branches, and swing myself across into the highway and back again. A rush through the air, an ecstatic suspension between earth and heaven, a swing into Elysium. I tried it once too often; the limb broke, and when I hobbled up from the bottom of the ditch below, it was with an injured hip, and a realization of the prospective attitude of the family in regard to the matter. That night my grandmother carried me up to bed, scolding in her excitable but soft Southern German voice every step of the way.

Once in a while, when the wildness, which

is normal in every child, had quieted down, I would creep along the palings at the southern boundary of the orchard to discover whether I could catch a sight of Rollo Reeside, the big dog, with a village-wide reputation for savagery, which belonged to the family next to ours. Rollo was his baptismal name—if such may be said about even the most hierarchic of animals—and Reeside that of the neighbors who were his masters. Rollo Reeside was tempermentally violent, the victor in many fights; he was besides the undisputed caretaker of the four or five acres of ground, the dark red house, flanked by high cherry trees, and the sprawling barn built at the very edge of it all; in a lesser degree he managed the people who lived in the dark red house. In common with my sisters, I took an unholy and awful delight in this beast. The dogs of our homes were men's dogs, and disdained anything in petticoats, but Rollo Reeside held a more catholic attitude, and was willing to devote both time and attention to the ringleted sex as well as to its opposite. To stand facing Rollo with a substantial wooden fence between you and him, and stick out a small, impertinent tongue, accompanying this with certain insulting wrigglings of

the body, or else regard him respectfully through the palings, were two of the many methods by which to defy or placate him. The first procedure was likely to result in a series of thunderous growls, and a rush to the fence, the second in nothing worse than a cavernous yawning from ear to ear, and a deliberate and ponderous walking away.

To leave this fearsome beast with eyes behind and before, as had the beasts in the Apocalypse, and follow along the wall of the sprawling red barn, brought me at last to the Old York Road, and in full sight of the wide-spreading lovely old hawthorn-bush which grew on the bank opposite. I think this bush took the measure of all the poetry which was in me. More than anything else did it hold for me the essence and the substance of all loveliness. When it showed white and broad in the early May, packed so full that it seemed as though a touch would send it in ruins upon the grass below, it was a delight worth the whole village coming out to see. I climbed up the bank, and put my nose close down into that mass of white, and found in that one whiff of perfume all the honey in Hymettus. How long it had grown there in the lane, nobody

knew, but it was always worth more than a transient notice, for even without its bloom it had a crabbed beauty that was like the jangling of bells with a sweet note pushing out now and again. On the York Road, across from the old house, there stood another hawthorn-bush, but this never broke out into flower; green and black with leaf and thorn, it took the dust of the rolling highway. Once an old man, dying in the neighborhood, and going over in his mind the bitter and futile experiences of his life, said: "The only thing I want on my coffin is a wreath of thorns." This was reported to the villagers and one of them, from the thorns of this ancient tree, made the wreath, and saw that it was deposited where the poor gentleman had asked it to be.

But the orchard itself still remains to be reckoned with. "Comfort me with apples," saith the Scriptures, and it may be what I would love to believe, in spite of the commentators, that these were of the streaked red and yellow variety growing in that gnarled orchard of my childhood. For surely these were spicy-sweet enough as to flavor, and generous enough as to weight and size, to suit the palate of both king and queen in the

Song of Solomon. They stood, these liberal and haunting trees, in the row nearest to the grass plot, where our daffodils came up in spring, and where all the year round the family linen was stretched out to dry. The fruit began to ripen about the end of June; it had no name, or one long forgotten; when it fell with an obese plump to the ground, a company of waiting wasps fastened upon it. To rush in and snatch some of the good stuff, in spite of the yellow-jacketed buzzings, was a dangerous proceeding, but to dare this and succeed, and sit afterward in calico-skirted ease, and partake of honey, was ample payment. I loved these trees and the two pippins which stood near them. When the latter went into the oven, the whole house was full of a sort of tart fragrance. But I loved, too, the apple-tree which grew by the gate leading into the sunny enchantments of the barnyard. It bore dull red fruit, and to bite into it was to bite upon a rosy-tinted substance as firm and solid as meat. It faced the sunrise, did this exquisite tree; shrill crowings and querulous cluckings came to it all day long. The years that it failed to bear were dire with prophecies of other and greater misfortunes; there were signs in the sun, and

strange looks to the moon; but when it hung heavy with its wonted burden, we gauged coming events by our visions of overflowing bins, and were thankful. When I climbed up into these sloping branches, I was in a closet, where the sound of the wind in the shallow grass beneath, and that of the delicate little brown bees, which for some reason or other had a particular liking for this corner, came slenderly up to me as out of a dream. Behind me rose the old house, and beyond that the York Road, with an occasional wheel stirring its customary dust, and from beyond the road the tinkle of cowbells from the Macdonald Farm. Not even Avalon, the island where one goes to get healed of his wounds, was more of a sanctuary than the sloping branches of that hoary red apple-tree.

Thrice blessed are they whose early years are spent in some countryside. The flowering and withering of the seasons, and every exquisite sound and sight—every lane, and pasture, and green corners and gnarled hollows everywhere, make them affluent with a treasure which neither change nor chance can steal away. They drink out of a full cup. And if they know and love an orchard—that casket of all good and comely opulences—

then indeed to them has been given the favor of the gods. For an apple-tree in itself holds all the sharp, throbbing, ecstatic aches of growth; it is packed with experiences. It whitens in spring, reddens in summer, turns naked in autumn, and gust-racked in winter; the rain beats upon it, the sun and the snow descend upon it, and so, although but a poor tree, it proves its relationship to us and therefore to the robust and whirling drama of life.

"Are there wars and rumors of wars?" said the orchard to me. "They shall cease. Are you young? You shall grow old. Are you sad, distracted, hurrying east and west, at the beck of every wind that whistles? You shall rest. Are you old? You shall renew your youth. The tree falls; the house is pulled down. Cousins, and doctors, and gypsy folk go," said the orchard to me, "but the Pattern of them, the thing which means loveliness, or loyalty, or romance, forever endures."

For Certain Folk

To toil, be humble, leave no lands—
These were of that swift, transient kind;
And yet old gusts of laughter sound
To keep them fast in mind.

Daddy Black and Others

WHEN we three small Reeses heard Daddy Black coming down the York Road in the sunset, we fled to shelter. And yet that *clap-clap-clap* along the dust in the distance, and then nearer and louder, a triple noise, as it were, or a mixture of noises—a grunt, a rumble, a stifled roar—as he paddled past the house in the glow from the west, was both a terrifying and an incredibly exhilarating experience. When he had gone, we crept out of the security of the back porch and stared after him with a sort of tense arid curiosity.

Daddy Black was the doer of trivial but necessary jobs, especially of those connected with carpentering, for the various households of the village. Huge, loosely built, lurching in his walk like a sailor, and altogether different from everybody else in the neighborhood, he had acquired, by reason of this difference, a settled importance. Possessed of a kind of raw, troll-like humor, he took pains to display it in those curious and indescribable

scrapes and clearings of the throat as he passed those houses in the village in which there lived children. This he did as he went to his work in the morning, and back again at set of sun. Never did a Saracen mother more effectively quiet her restless child with her "Richard the Lion-Heart rides by," than did a York Road mother in a like circumstance with her "Daddy Black'll catch you if you don't stop crying!"

Daddy lived down the pike near the two stores, on the corner of a seldom-traveled lane, hardly more than a wagon-track overgrown with grass, and in a brick house covered with ivy, and thrusting out into a spare half-field, half-garden, where beets, and onions, and potatoes grew up fraternally year after year with batchelor buttons, speckled lilies, round, single fever-few, and hundred-leaved roses.

His wife was a very tall, thick-hipped, simple woman, about his own age, with a disposition quite the opposite from that of her husband; her married state was a matter of critical wonderment to the villagers. How had her hulk of a man turned soft enough to propose to her! And how had she found the surpassing courage to accept him! Her life was not

a monotonous one. Daddy supplied her with variety sufficient to spice the lives of two or three other women, or indeed of the entire community. He was subject to occasional spells of idleness, or obstinacy, which lasted indefinitely, and resulted in a complete holiday from work of any degree or kind. He would waddle upstairs at his usual hour for bed-going, and in his usual humor, to awake the following morning apparently fastened down tightly to his voluminous pillows and under a hillock of gay quilts. Threats, beggings, objurgations, personal opinions shrilled up the stairway by his aroused wife were of no avail. He lay flattened out like a piece of timber, his eyes closed, his lips dumb.

"Josiah!"

No answer.

"Josiah, they've sent for you from Chestnut Hill to do that job you promised."

No answer.

Once an important, quick-tempered patron of his, much irritated by his prolonged absence, which delayed the finishing of a special piece of work, sent word to Mrs. Black to douse him with a bucket of cold pump water. Even this, shrieked out at his bedside, with energetic pullings and shakings of his huge

body, were in vain. Daddy's eyes remained closed, his lips dumb.

This story, and others of a like character, and the added personal experience of the children of the neighborhood, emphasized the wild difference between Daddy and the rest of the world; these singled him out for a particular regard and attention. He represented to us youngsters the queer, the grinning gargoyle jutting out of the cathedral quiet of our days.

I suppose that every rural settlement knows at least one wanderer, one wayfaring creature who comes and goes, an aloof, pictorial figure, brief strutter on a brief stage, a mixture of wastrel and adventurer. If he has a story it is never told. Such a man appeared at uncertain intervals in the vicinity of the York Road. Going along in the dust at an even, unhurried pace, a stick with a showy bundle attached carried on his shoulder, his eyes in an unshifting look directly ahead, he was plain vagabond, and nothing else. Everything about him, his faded, shapeless hat, torn coat, broken shoes, even the persimmon-colored handkerchief which covered his swinging bundle, were parcel and part of a congenital beggarhood. Legend cannot fasten

itself to mere dirt and dilapidation, or romance to what is too obviously derelict and nothing more. And yet his remoteness—for he made friends of no one—his undeviating, steady pace down the middle of the road, his silence —for his speech was only an unlovely grunt —made him of a vicarious kind of interest to us. Rumor had attached a name to him, a stuttering German one, but my family called him Schnautzer, German, also, but for what reason I never knew. Schnautzer, perhaps because of this figurative rechristening, was one of my grandmother's pensioners. He used to march past our Paradise trees, and back to the yard in the rear, and stand like an iron image until someone appeared. Our dogs sniffed delicately at the odors with which he reeked, that of the haystack, his last night's lodging, or the glass of whiskey bestowed upon him at one of the shops down the road; sometimes they growled vaguely far down in their throats. My grandmother gave him bread and meat and a bowl of coffee, and standing close beside her, one of us children would stare with a bursting curiosity at the murky stranger. Schnautzer would pack the bread and meat away in his dingy pockets, drink the coffee, grunt, and go. Once he

went and never returned, and then from a fact he changed into a tradition, and the dash and color which had been denied to him while present, became his in absence; in a strange sort of way he grew dimly important.

Schnautzer, of course, and others with a like predilection for roving, were the first of the genus tramp, which a few years after were so familiar and disquieting a sight in the country roads and byways. No doubt, at first, unemployment was at the bottom of the matter; it was difficult to find work, and being without it became a settled habit; but a disinclination for continuous labor, and an ineradicable love for roving from place to place, were certainly the secondary causes. At that time, in rural places, although the headlong rush from the farms had not yet begun, there was ample work for an extra hand or two. Wages were not high, but life was simple, and wants fewer. The labor field was almost entirely in the hands of men. This simplified the matter again. Schnautzer and his tribe therefore met with only a spare sympathy; they were considered cumberers of the earth. Little allowance was made for the fact that in some instances this idleness must have been due to a slowness of adjustment to new and

difficult conditions. Psychology had not yet turned its guns upon the situation, and the harder verdict against them, a verdict which was masculine, and in the temper of the day, persisted.

When the trees began to bud, and the pools left in the Waverly lanes by the last night's shower shone as blue and white as the sky overhead, and the dandelions thronged the grass with their wild and delicate gold, then it was that Susanna Hood reappeared to tramp the rolling miles of the York Road. Where she had eaten, and drunk, and slept during the winter season, whether with some kind kinspeople, or as a vagrant at some public institution, no one knew or ever found out. She was excessively thin, dark-haired, dark-eyed, with a tireless body, and a worn, and excited expression of face. Years after, when I read Scott's novels, I always associated her in my mind with Meg Merrilies of "Guy Mannering"; a smaller, shabbier, more ignoble Meg Merrilies was the poor creature, lacking the glamor of the Scotch madwoman, but like her roaming the country from end to end, coming and going with a frightening rapidity, muttering to herself, singing in a coarse, thin voice scraps of current sentimental

balladry. People considered her harmless, but at the same time were elaborately careful about arousing her anger. The boys of the neighborhood, however, with the insensitiveness of half-grown youth, used to hail her from the topmost rail of some fence with a shout indicative of both comradeship and derision. Sometimes she sang them a ribald song, sometimes pelted them with stones. Nobody ever saw her eat, no one knew wherever she lodged at night,—except occasionally in the porch of Saint John's church. People, as I have said, considered her harmless, but they had one fear in regard to her, and that was, that she might burn down some barn or shed at night. In view of this fear, it showed an odd sort of insensibility to the responsibilities of the situation that they made no protest to her running at large. The reason for this insensibility may have been a lack of social conscience, or ignorance in regard to the potential dangers of the matter. Susanna Hood's case was a pitiful one, the second of its kind in the restricted rural settlement. Two persons with indubitably disordered brains were loose in the neighborhood. Nowadays these two would be removed from public attention, given medical

care and oversight, rest, or simple work to furnish them with employment or diversion. No layman's opinion in regard to the harmlessness or harmfulness of a case would be considered. On the other hand, at that time there was some recognition, as there is now, of the difference between excessive nervousness and insanity. Down the road, below the toll-gate, stood a house which was pointed out as having once been the stage and habitation of an unusual tragedy. The mistress of this house had broken down in health, and her husband, for some reason or other, probably to obtain entire control of her money and country acres, had had the poor lady removed to an asylum. A week or two after she died. The neighbors were aroused to such a pitch of indignation that they made it apparent to the widower. Presently he disappeared, to the far West it was supposed, although a story persisted that he had returned, wandered down to the Baltimore docks, fallen in, and been drowned. Suicide, the more inexorable York Roaders declared, suicide from remorse. No matter how much of this tragic business was true, the fact remains that the house stood there for thirty or forty years, with the town reaching out to it and beating

upon it, blocking the way to all urban improvements. The master had gone, and the title to the property could not be given. It had an air to it, this aloof and idle house, standing back in its abandoned trees, with its lonely eye on the highway. Its dreadful experience seemed incorporated into the texture of every brick and stone. People passed it with a feeling that here was the beginning and the end of many things.

In the spring weather, too, came the organ-grinder with his stale music and his scarlet-jacketed monkey, on his way to the county-town. Stale music, because even we children knew by heart the tunes which he ground out from door to door; war melodies like "Tramp! tramp! tramp! the boys are marching," or "Tenting on the old camp ground"; sprawling minor melodies like "Listen to the mocking bird," or "Jane, my pretty Jane," or "There's a light in the window for you, brother." The first two we sang in a truly catholic spirit, sang, although ardent Confederates, with our equally catholic friends in the neighborhood; the others we wailed out together, sitting on the front steps at dusk, in the dark of the Paradise trees, having caught them up from the repertory of a cer-

tain brown-cheeked cousin. My two sisters had clear, pretty voices, but as their idea in reference to singing—and also mine—was to give each note as shrieking a quality as possible, the effect was devastating; it was three noises compassed in one. The organ-man ground out these fervid songs, and then suddenly slipped into a waltz. Our feet ached to swing into it, but, in spite of our wildness, a kind of ancestral gravity prevented us from doing it before this strange man, this foreigner. Our grandparents behind us in the house might readily have been called the same, but in our loyal minds we drew a great distinction between this swarthy, sweating, black-headed creature and our straight, fair-skinned and blue-eyed elders, a kind of Nordic snobbery, perhaps. We gave the monkey the pennies, which our grandmother had given us, and pushed back again to the front gate. We loathed that monkey. He was too human; he upset our conventional ideas in regard to animals; he was not homegrown. And yet the Italian and his weird small beast, wayfarers both, had, for that reason, an adequate share of mystery; they made a difference. We watched them go away, the man trudging through the dust under the weight

of his battered instrument, the monkey a mere blob of scarlet perched on the top. Then we went back to our seats on the porch, and broke out into an ear-splitting rendition of the refrain: "and the mocking-bird is singing o'er her grave."

A short, squat, paunchy man was the proprietor of one of the stores in the village, a lank, dark, black-haired man that of the other. One was German, the other of English extraction. These two gentlemen were masters of the entire situation. Town was too distant for casual errands; you bought from them or did without your pound of crackers or ounce of cinnamon or whatever small article was lacking to your kitchen shelves. Each shop was the stereotyped one of the suburban settlement. Each held the same odors. All the spice and sugar, and meal, and vinegar and gin, and bundles of rope, and stacks of brooms, and painted buckets, which had been handed over the counters, had made themselves into a smell which became a fixed atmosphere. Each shop had a bar, and in the first there was an extension containing a back room, where a thirsty farmer might sit at a whitely scrubbed table, and drink a glass of frothing ale or beer. As

to the proprietors themselves, their conduct was all that goes into the making of wise and successful shopkeeping. They were impeccably neutral. Confederate and Federal men, statesrighters and black Republicans might froth and rave about them, but these two were of that stripe of politics which belongs to each and all—the desire to make an honest living and keep away from disaster. Every rag of gossip in the county fluttered to their wide porches and fastened there for the especial gratification of the buyers and loungers. To hear that your neighbor was worse off than yourself was not an altogether unpleasant experience. Death was always interesting, and a guess at the dollars and acres left behind by the deceased a stimulating problem in arithmetic. A birth added to the bucolic population. A marriage brought out all the genealogical resources of the bystanders. Even the sermons preached on Sundays at Saint John's or the Huntingdon Baptist church provided critical meat for those who felt capable of masticating it. And always there were the crops and the weathers. And these two dispensers of groceries, bacon, small drygoods, and liquors, kept to their smooth and trusty neutrality, listened, nodded, lifted mobile eye-

brows, said "tschuch" and "You don't tell me" at the proper intervals and at sterile moments contributed an atom to the revolving mass. There was scarcely a household in Waverly, no matter in what obscure and lonely lane, which did not gather to itself some morsel from those tables spread in the village. More than one husband, trudging home too late through the afternoon sunshine, to some mellowed house set in a maze of lilac or syringa bushes, made his peace with his waiting family by a scrap of gossip from the porch of one of the general shops.

We children seldom saw the inside of these lively public places. Except for a rare errand connected with some small ware for the family—the original message almost swamped in the dozen solemn directions accompanying it—we were strangers both to their encompassing odors and the worldly knowingness, which appeared fixed in their atmosphere. The dull hours of the morning or afternoon seemed to be selected for these errands. Sometimes a pleasant affair of our own, such as the buying of a stick of striped candy, or a cornucopia of sweetened anise seeds, took us there. The cornucopia was made out of stiff white and pale pink paper, and held about a

half gill of anise seeds, covered each with a coat of thick sugar, and making two or three biting mouthfuls much appreciated by the juvenile palate. The striped candy was of the immemorial kind familiar to children; it had delightful wearing qualities; a cent's worth of it stuck into the mouth, and sucked at slowly and ceremoniously, would last until we reached our front gate under the Paradise trees.

Each shop, as I have said, had its bar, attended to meticulously by the short, squat, paunchy proprietor of the one, or the lank, dark, black-haired proprietor of the other.

I am quite certain that the relinquishing of this particular trade on the part of either gentleman would have thrown the bulk of the other business into the pockets of his rival. For there was no continuous public opinion in regard to temperance. Gin or whiskey was simply merchandise; to sell either was as entirely proper as to sell starch or cornmeal, or a bar of brown scrubbing soap. Scarcely a house along the road but treasured at least one bottle of brandy or cordial for some emergency of sickness, or the like, or a bottle of fine wine left from a christening party, and kept for holiday vis-

itors from the county or town; homemade wines stood in clear reds and yellows along the cupboard shelves; if you ran in on your neighbor of a cold afternoon, a slice of cake and a glass of the latter were offered you. Sometimes a recipe was so age-worn and precious—some ancestral formula for the brewing of a remedy for colic or other stomachic pains—that it was kept a secret by the family lucky enough to own it. Many a bottle of it was given away to fortunate friends, but never the recipe itself. This resulted in curious attempts being made to wriggle the secret out of the younger or easier members of the family. Every social affair, dinner, or wedding, or coming-of-age party included champagne or punch in its list of refreshments; eggnogg strong and hot, and smelling of rum and spices, was the time-honored drink at Christmas and New Year. If your pockets were fuller than those of your neighbors, and you could afford the dignity, of a butler, you drank wine every dinner hour. My grandfather indulged in his glass or two of ale or beer every day in the week, and so did his friends, who, like him, were of German extraction. There was no question of moral or immoral in the matter. It was merely in

accordance with the traditions of the times.

And with all this apparent slackness and easy attitude in regard to spirituous liquors, was there more intemperance than at the present day? I think—although it seems a contradiction to say so—that there was less drinking and yet more drunkards. I mean that in spite of the general acceptance of alcoholic drinks as a part of the customary routine of the day, there were many persons who touched them only on unusual occasions; their very accessibility lessened their lure and attraction; on the other hand, more persons drank to excess, and were publicly known to do so. It would be a hard and unsatisfactory task to explain this more fully. To drink or not to drink was left wholly to the individual; the second had not yet been made into a commandment. I cannot remember, however, that drunkenness was considered less disgraceful than it is now; it was, on the contrary, a personal affront to a family. Three sad cases in the neighborhood made much talk. There was the boy who had been so sheltered, so preserved from all contact with alcohol, that it remained an unknown experience to him; when he arrived at maturity he fell into its clutch and became a roving

wastrel. There was the cultivated gentleman who used to reel homeward every night with wit enough to tell his place of abode, but never his name: this man came under the fire of a great evangelist, and suddenly and permanently reformed himself. There was the other gentleman, who stridently proclaimed his army title from the ditch by the side of the road, and, pulled out of his mean shelter, was assisted to his house by a bodyguard of half-disgusted, half-laughing neighbors.

Yet the stirrings and beginnings of a far different and more drastic attitude toward the entire question of temperance were beginning to be heard. The New Year's festivities in particular were subject to much warranted discussion. Young men would drive around in carriages on the first day of the year from house to house, receiving at each some intoxicant, and by the end of daylight many of them were insensible with drink. Public opinion, becoming more sensitive to the situation, raised an outcry. The short, squat, paunchy man and the lank, dark, black-haired one also began to be looked upon with disfavor. Presently they closed their bars, and confined themselves to innocuous wares like meats or groceries. The saloon more and

more took their place, and this, too, with its pernicious fashion of treating, came into the glare of discussion. Little by little a certain number of housewives left out gin or rum from the ingredients of pies or puddings. Books like "Ten Nights in a Bar Room" secured an immense number of readers. The physiologies used in the schools elaborated on the ill effects of alcohol upon the human body. There were tracts, lectures, sermons, processions. One afternoon, such a procession wound through the streets of Baltimore. It was composed entirely of women—college students and graduates, teachers, doctors, professors, and members from the various evangelical churches. It had dignity, a sort of solemn impressiveness. For women, whose reformative instincts are generally sharper than men's, everywhere crowded into societies for the single purpose of abolishing the use of alcohol in every form. The subject of temperance, instead of a personal, became a universal one.

The Strange Pedler

I have cloth as white
As the apricot,
Of the kind that blows
In Camelot.

Silver and white it is,
Silver and white,
Like the seven hounds
That race through the night.

Three black candlesticks
Wrought for a shelf;
A cool, crooked bowl
Of pear-green delf.

Orange neckerchiefs;
Gilt bands for curls;
Little fine books,
Full of dancing girls.

Come and buy, come and buy,
Come and buy again:—
York Road, Merryman's,
Tinges Lane!

Others

WHEN a Waverly householder wished to clear one of his chimneys of the accumulated soot, he made a bundle of evergreen boughs, or perhaps dragged in the dried-up Christmas tree abandoned to a corner of the yard, and thrust it as high up the aperture as it would go. By dint of pushing it from side to side, and hither and yon, he succeeded at last in scraping down a peck or two of acrid black stuff, the leavings of a year's fires. An idyllic fashion in which to clean a country chimney! To set the woodland trees to render you a homely service! Thereafter the Waverly householder was entitled to the sleep of the righteous. His roof, at least, was not likely to go up some night in a roar and flash of flames.

But two miles away in Baltimore, and until I was in my thirteenth or fourteenth year, there were regular chimney sweeps, whose pay came out of the town pockets, and who followed their historic trade certain

times in the twelvemonth. These were not of the Charles Lamb variety, "tender novices," drinking the hot Salopian cup—that brew of roadside sassafras—so early in the morning, but of the humdrum Baltimore brand, as black of face as their fathers and mothers before them, with the accrued blackness of their sooty calling. And yet each was a silent creature, coming into your house without a word, and going from it again without one. A chimney is a secret thing, and each boy took on a something which belonged by right of age to this dark, deep opening in the wall. He became part, though a poor one, of a venerable story, told again and again. Any mystery which could be squeezed out of the simple business was added to this silent negro lad.

A master sweep attended each boy. I remember one of them quite well. I am certain that I hated the man. I was frantically social; I loved people, and I had a hundred piercing questions to ask—from the matter of the boy's lodging, down through his sable ancestry, to that of his lean wages. But the master was wooden, his eyes in a stare; he had much pomp of manner, and the look of one suddenly elevated to consequence. A con-

sequence, no doubt, acquired by him in payment for his vote. One of his legs was stiff and shortened, and this lameness obliged him to use a cane as thick as a baby's arm, and of a dull, black, withered-looking wood. Its deliberate, flat, certain clamp upon the flags of the yard or the kitchen floor gave him another inch or two of pomp and consequence.

The sweep carried a bundle of iron rods, about the size and weight of gas pipes; to the top rod was fastened a brush. He took up one after the other, screwed them together, and when he had a sufficient length, pushed them, brush foremost, into the chimney. There was a confused, scratching noise. Five minutes and all was over. The rods were unscrewed and bundled up again; the black face and the white face disappeared through the door. *Clamp, clamp, clamp,* pounded the withered-looking stick under the mulberry-trees out in the side yard.

Do you believe in magic? Life is full of it. Coming along the edge of the dusk, up the Harford Road, a short, light ladder in one hand, a blazing torch in the other, the lamplighter was a secret creature, in this world, but not of it, a man out of a very old, old book, filled with sharp wood-cuts of

wands, and bubbling scarlet pots, and incantations sung in blurred, slow words to the music of broken tunes. His torch made a sound like the leaves crackling under your tread in the autumn. It was a continuous, thin cry. The stamp of his feet on the pavement was that of one hurrying on some common but lovely errand. You stood and watched him, and presently, like the petaling of a large golden flower, a lamp flared up; in a little while, another. The man grew less distinct; he moved in a doubled mystery. You could see—if you had the eye for it—a crowd of shadowy figures following him. Sleep, for instance, with grave eyes, drooping head, and carrying a closed leathern lantern; and Dream, tall, soft, dim-footed, barely seen through an encircling cloud of mist. And presently again he was gone; the stir, the hurry, the stamping had come to an end. The Harford Road was lit from one corner to the other. You looked at the west, and saw that it was as pink as the sprawling cup of a mallow blossom; you looked at the east, and saw that it was a vaguer color. The trees there in the park had suddenly grown longer. And this golden petaling was going on all over Baltimore. You felt as though

you were taking part in some great, strange, jeweled affair, which you would forever remember, and yet be slow to talk about.

If you lived in Waverly, and for your health's or your church's sake, ate fish on Friday; or if you had little skill in the concocting of certain succulent dishes, and much faith in those who had that heaven-given faculty; or if you were pinched for time, or else for a holiday; then, when you heard a particular bellowing voice out in the village highway, you ran to your door, ready to exchange your country's silver for the wares which that bellower carried.

"De-b-b-b-b-le c-r-a-b!
D-e-b-b-l-e c-r-a-b!
Hit her in de haid wid a
D-e-b-b-l-e c-r-a-b!"

This was not the shriek of escaped devils, or melody with a "dying fall"; or the leaping music of the spheres. It was a good, coarse, honest bawl, an invitation to you to come out and buy yourself a platter full of victuals as comely and fit as were Milton's spread out in the pages of his famous poem. You were good, and coarse, and honest. You had a stomach—thank God—as well as a soul. Of germs you had scarcely heard. The invention

of some man, perhaps? Men, it is true, are the devil. You descended the front steps with a colored plate in your hand.

"Come over here, uncle."

Black Autolycus came. He eyed you over the edge of his flat wicker basket, covered with a fair linen cloth. His apron was as white as curds. He had the air of one of the greater prophets.

"I wonder if they're as good as they were last Friday, uncle."

Footsteps sounded in the lane. Autolycus threw back his head and roared.

"D-e-b-b-l-e c-r-a-b!

C-r-a-a-a-b!"

Then he turned. "Dese yeah debble crab is all right, honey. I'se a good Baptis' church member, honey. I'se hones'. I'se been dipped."

"Give me three, uncle."

He whipped the cloth off the wicker basket. An opulent odor, compounded of fish—baked to a tender cinnamon—and of good cayenne pepper rose in the village air. You held out your plate. He ceremoniously deposited three deviled crabs upon its blue and white surface.

"Here's your money."

He replaced the cloth and stood still a minute.

"Hit her in de haid wid a
D-e-b-b-l-e c-r-a-a-a-b!"

Greedy for information, you halted with one foot on the step, the other on the dust of the roadway.

"Who is it you want to hit in the head, uncle?"

All the craft and the secretiveness of the jungle descended upon Autolycus. His face looked as blank as a pebble in the lane. He scratched his head; he fumbled with the leather straps over his shoulder. Then suddenly the peddler came uppermost in him. He began to twinkle.

"I'se had fo' wives, honey."

He moved away, bellowing again.

"C-r-a-a-a-b
D-e-b-b-l-e c-r-a-b!"

Another purveyor of Friday dinners, as smoothly black as the first, and with as white an apron fastened around as Falstaffian a waist, chose for his territory the Harford Road, and the country-like lanes pushing out of it to east and to west. He carried a deep, wide, tin kettle full of oysters, the vessel polished until it shone like your mother's wed-

ding silver, and a deep, wide, tin ladle, as exquisite as the kettle. Out of the corner of his thick mouth he twisted two shrill, hard, monotonous notes, the first prolonged for a second or two, the other much higher, and ending in a snap. Heard above the creak of wagon wheels and the tramp of horses in the half-rural street, it was like a scrap of cracked, rather forlorn, wearing music.

"O——y
Oy!"

Half wheedler, half swaggerer, purely and altogether African, he went his shrill way, fluent about his wares, sharp with his change, a vehement, crisp creature, less likable than Autolycus, and of a meaner substance, as befitted one who sold only what he had bought, and not what he had fetched from the wharves and made over into a spiced and savory thing for the table.

"O——y!
Oy!"

He could be heard in the next street. He could be heard almost to the cemetery gate.

There were others. These were the regular hucksters, the Caucasian vendors of farm produce from Anne Arundel or other near-by counties, and of fish of all kinds in spring and

Lent. Each had a horse and wagon—the first, bony, the second, weather-battered—to the latter clung half-grown boys to chorus their particular stuff, country or otherwise. They were rough, shrewd, open-air folks, of the type which considers to-day, and not to-morrow, with the bearing and the elaborateness of adventurers. Their wit was ready at a moment. They were gay, loud, liberal with their speech, their manners in part those of the swashbuckler, and in part of the second-rate tradesman. They could lie like troopers.

In spring, these noisy hawkers, crying their old and hearty products, swarmed along the streets of Baltimore. Neither lawns, nor gloves, nor perfumes, nor "golden quoifs and stomachers" were theirs, but strawberries, and rhubarb, and radishes, and peas, and beans, or silver-scaled trout, or rock, or shad, and no Autolycus in the "Winter's Tale" could have sung their wagon loads more lustily than they. And Dorcas and Mopsa stood, in the shape of some provident housewife, in the shelter of a side door and beckoned to them.

I remember Sam best of all. Many a hilarious time have I listened to his bargaining. It was a lesson in craft, self-trumpeting, elastic economics.

Sam was a heavy man, with an arm which could have felled an ox. He walked ponderously, swinging from side to side. His eye was subtle, his tongue bold. For the moment he was the master of your fate.

"These here potatoes, lady, they'll melt in your mouth. Ain't they mixed with old ones? No, *ma'am.* Take a peck?"

In the meanwhile the boys, squatting on the sides of the battered vehicle, boomed out like hounds in full cry.

"*Po* - ta - toes!
Po - ta - toes!
An'Rannel *po* - ta - toes!
Levy a peck!"

Perhaps he brought to the side door a basket full of rosy fruit.

"Look at them berries, lady. Watch me turn 'em out, on this paper. All sound an' firm, lady. Nothing wrong with *them* berries."

And the chorus from the wagon would boom out.

"*Straw*berries!
Straw - ber - ries!
Ten Cent a box!
Straw - berries!"

If Lenten dishes were his day's load, he

would appear before the waiting housewife with a dripping bunch of perch in one hand and a great dripping trout in the other.

"Them gills is all right, lady. *I* didn't paint them red. Them fish is *fresh*. You'd rather have the trout? Thirty cents, lady. Can't make up your mind? Take it for a quarter, ma'am."

These hucksters belonged to an earlier Baltimore, more human, more provincial, easier going. When competition became fierce, and living more expensive, along with both came an educated attitude toward hygiene and sanitation. As soon as the average housekeeper grew any way familiar with the theory of germs, she refused to buy crabs, or oysters, or apples, or celery from wandering peddlers, even though their palatable stuff was covered with fair linen cloths, or encased in shining tin kettles, or fastened down snugly in white pine boxes. She had occasionally caught one of their kind polishing off a yellow and red apple on his trouser legs. Germs harbor in dirt, and what is dirtier than a trouser leg, or the hand engaged—after digging around in a hundred boxes and barrels—in the polishing?

Their survivors may be seen occasionally in some obscure street, or the packed negro, or foreign quarter, or, rid of their vociferous importance, crawling in covered vehicles—their rural commodities carefully stored away behind glass—from door to door, tradesmen only, realists to the core. Gone is adventure, perished is romance.

Allied with these vanished street criers was the squat, elderly man who might be labeled "Smells," from the hundred odors which were blown from his short, wiry, tireless body, and the clothes which hung upon it—half patched and greasy—from shoulder to ankle. Every reeking, decayed thing from every corner, and hole, and burrow in the city was fastened upon him; no knife could have cut it loose. Smells had eyes that were so small and yet so sharp that they pricked you with each look of theirs, from under their swarthy, drooped lids. His rough black hair fell like frayed shoe strings on each grimy cheek. He made a halting place of some back court or alley, from which he watched for prospective cooks or their mistresses, in the meantime suddenly shrilling out his thin, alert trade-calls, like the pounce of a terrier upon a rat.

"Rags! Bones!
R - a - a - g - s!
B - o - n - e - s!"

And at that snarling, sudden cry, as at the flip of a challenge, or the dip of a flag, or the flaunt of a scarlet cloth, every boy in the neighborhood would plunge headlong into the cobbled alley, run the odorous creature to earth, and torment him with an exaggerated mimicry of voice and manner. The air cracked with a thousand tumults.

Smells never turned his head in the direction of the swarming pack. If he were weighing rags, meticulously watched by the disdainful servant, or dispensing coins at an unlatched gate, he continued his careful business; when his blundering English was not intelligible, he supplemented it by making signs with his supple, dramatic fingers.

If, in his snarling progress, he happened to pass a school building, his cry would set the boys into an instant, incipient riot; if, by some unexpected luck, or decree of the benevolent gods, the hour was that of recess, out of the gate would pour a precipitate, pushing, joyous crowd, to follow, and to mimic, to belabor with epithets and unholy calls, until a great clanging bell drove them

back again to discipline and to lessons.

And Smells went on with his wailing.

"Rags!

B - o - n - e - s!"

No turn of his head, no threat from his lips. This was the grand manner. This was some lordly Ahasuerus or Sennacherib, or a purpled prince from Smyrna or Babylon. Perhaps, with that prescience, which is as common to the lowest as to the highest, he saw, in the blurred future, his children's children dominating financially the descendants of this Canaanitish rabble.

The sweep, the lamplighter, the hawker of the old kind and degree are gone, and with them their portion of romance and adventure. Do you believe in magic? The town is full of it. Suddenly, on the edge of dusk, down the streets of Waverly, flare up the lamps, each like the petaling of a large golden flower. A mile and a half away, along the Harford Road, at the same moment, the same sudden petaling! And in clear weather, if you look to the west, you will see that it is as pink as the sprawling cup of a mallow blossom.

An English Garden

He saw, at an old woman's door,
White gilliflowers by the score,

Held in a wind that tossed them up
And back again, as in a cup.

Black walls, a wind going to and fro,
White gilliflowers in a row.

It was a fortnight after Lent,
In Canterbury town, in Kent.

Holidaying

SOMEWHERE along in May the exquisite white of the blackberry blossoms began to foam down the back lanes in Waverly. At the same time, and almost every day, there fell a little, slender, silver rain, stopping for a while and beginning again; this was called a blackberry rain. The country grew a very fair thing, mist-like, cloud-like; the smell of the blossoms, together with the drip of the rain, gave the whole weather an unexpected strange loveliness. You felt yourself a newcomer in a separate world. A month or more later, the fruit appeared, first scarlet, then a round, glossy black. The blackberrying season was on.

By what favor of the gods my sisters and I were included in the party which set out from the old house some June afternoon, intent on filling sundry kettles and baskets with the ripened wild fruit, none will ever know. It was always in the afternoon; it was always hot. If we had prayed fervently on the preceding night for fair weather,—and

we prayed for everything on shore and sea and under the sea—then these cloud-free skies were the answer. We started off, each carrying a tin kettle, crossed the orchard and the Old York Road, climbed a fence, and let ourselves down in Macdonald's pasture. A breathless moment. A thick, dry odor hung in the air. A fiery sun stood in the parched, clear sky. We started again, we small ones trudging unimportantly in the rear. Not for all the kingdoms of the earth would we, by sign or word, have attracted adult attention to our delighted, pinafored selves. Everything had the feel and look of sheer adventure—the click of the kettles, as we went along, the fat round stick which one of our cousins held in her hand, even the thump of our slow feet on the shriveling meadow grass. Wall and chimney disappeared. We were in a different and strange country, sky overhead, ground underneath, but of wide spaces, miles of leather-hued fences, a tree here and there, an elder bush with its broad white fragile blossoms, or a patch of the first yarrow, bitter, crude grey-white, straight as spears. It was as though we were walking, walking to the end of the world. Suddenly we came to a hollow, and a huddle of briers, showing

patches shining black from top to bottom. Here were our berries. In a minute or two they were falling with a quick, pleasant clop-clop into our kettles, the sound turning into a duller one as the latter began steadily to fill up. Our cousins plucked and chattered; my sisters and I plucked and ate, and dropped what was left after eating into our diminutive cans, dividing, after the immemorial arithmetic of children—two for ourselves and one for the family. And all about was the scent of the berries, like something spicy boiling over on a stove, and of the wind in the fence, and the earth under our feet. We left the hollow, and trailed along a slow creek, lying like a band of copper between stirless reeds and short, straggling bushes. We climbed fences, cut through the edge of a tall, cool wood, and into lanes climbing eastward through red, crumbling banks, showing an occasional lemon-colored mullein; everywhere were afternoon and the blaze of sun. Not a house within hail. Everywhere the sense of something which might happen, a glimpse of Macdonald's bull, perhaps, the terror of the country, in a leisurely stroll down some by-way, or a watchful, black-whiskered dog too ready to bark at innocent wayfarers, or

worst of all, a stray man, leaning on a pasture gate and staring at us. Against the dog we had our cousin's welcome stick, against the bull nothing but wild and panting flight, against the man, a brief denial of trespassing, which he might or might not believe. The glare lessened, the shadows grew deep. Tired, stained, torn, and content, we turned homeward. A chimney thrust up out of the distance, a window flared yellow behind a row of trees; we heard a cart whining down the Old York Road. A few yards more, and we had reached our orchard bars. The blackberrying for that year was over.

If you asked a Baltimore countian what he considered one of the foremost public happenings of the year, he would answer: "The Cattle Show." Every human being within hail or sight of it, and a great number from the neighboring town made it their goal for an hour or two during its week's or ten days' duration. Dust, noise, sun, smells. Out of the blur and confusion of those distant days, these are practically all which remain of that great county gathering. My mother and my sisters and myself were caught in and pressed upon by a happy, chattering, easy-going crowd of people, but how we came there, or

how we went, I have not the slightest recollection. Out of the blur there pushes a cow's sleek head, or the shout of a vender of lemonade, or of those curious small baskets and photograph frames made of shells, which served as a sort of official souvenir. My mother, also, warm, perspiring, breathless, under the shadow of her parasol, anxious about the crowd, steering her three wild little girls away from it to the undoubted safety of the high picket fence outside. Whether the Cattle Show was held each year, or at irregular intervals, I have no means of knowing; I do know that the place of its holding was removed to one farther up the county. Dust, noise, sun, smells. These I remember in an obscure, distant sort of fashion.

The word "dappled" brings to my mind many a delicate line of English verse, and the fall of light and shadow on lane, or field, or wood. It brings back to me an exquisite, solemn picture of many years ago, that of the baptizings on Sunday afternoons at Paradise Mills. "Dappled" is the only word to describe the shifting, tempered sun, the clear black thrown by the great boughs overhead. The trees came close up to the rippling golden water; the wind stirred their tops. Caught

in between them and the banks, in the incessant ethereal movement of sun and shade, stood the crowd of people; across the lane on the fence rails sat the irreverent, sometimes silent, sometimes drawling out comments in friendly undertones. When the singing began, the irreverent to a boy joined liberally in the chorus. My sisters and I had often gleefully attended the christening of babies and small children at Saint John's, mere sprinklings upon the juvenile forehead, but that grown-up persons clad in gowns should submit to complete immersion in a body of water, was an almost revolutionary experience to us. We pushed to the side, curious, impressed, stone-still, our Episcopalian upbringing dropping from us like a cloak. We smelled the pennyroyal under our feet. We listened to the singing of the hymns, which in themselves were so different in general from what we heard in church, with a phraseology as intimate as a pebble or a tuft of grass, the refrain swinging along with a mellow primitiveness into the quiet afternoon. We were afraid that some one might be drowned. Every moment was full of a tremulous excitement. The pastor read out of his great book. The candidates for bap-

tism, clad in their black robes, went down into the golden water; they came up again dripping wet, to be led back to a tent under the trees. The pastor raised his long, oratorical hand; we bowed our heads. Walking demurely across the fields afterwards, we talked it out, amongst our small, subdued selves, keeping well in the fore part of our minds the names of the candidates, and those of the acquaintances of our grandparents who had been there. This kept us chattering to interested elders for an hour, after reaching home, until wearying they drove us to bed. The next day we "practiced" baptizing in the field opposite the house—a field up to our armpits in grass. The heavy-weight of the party was selected as the pastor, the smaller and more docile as the candidates. Down we went with a shout into the tall, fragrant grass, and up we came again with another. There was no drowning. A prospective kick upon the soft shins of the pastor, kept her to the fair playing of the game. By our especial underground process of thought—divination, perhaps—we had reached the conclusion that our elders and betters would not altogether approve of this game, so we vowed with apostolic fervor to ourselves, to keep it

a strict and hilarious secret of our own. And all through it, and beyond it and behind it, showed the picture of that dappled countryside. We smelled the pennyroyal underfoot. We heard the singing of strange, half melancholy hymns.

Tight in my memory stands the small ancient candy shop around on the corner of Aisquith and Little McElderry Streets, a pebble's throw from the Wells and McComas monument. It was owned and carried on by a blessed creature, elderly as to years, who had conceived the idea of pouring hot molasses into diminutive scalloped tin pans, and dispensing the mixture, cooled off, at a cent a pan. The children called it "pan taffy." We laid our coins on the counter, and watched this beneficent being delicately wriggle the point of a sharp knife around the edges of the hardened stuff, whip it out of the tin, deposit it upon a square of white paper, and so on to our waiting hands. Those of us who were piggish, thrust the whole mass—it was no larger than two half dollars joined together—into our mouths, and retired, dumb and gorged, from respectable society until our sucking and swallowing were over. Those of us who had been told, from early

in the morning until late at night, to be nice and delicate about our manner of eating, took a nibble here, another there; a sticky string began to form between our lips and our fingers; we pulled at this, and it stretched into a yard or more; we were good New Orleans molasses down to our waists.

Have you ever climbed carefully up a front step—a stranger's front step—and surreptitiously but boisterously rung the door bell at the top? On Friday afternoons, a picked, wild few, four or five in all, tore out of number Thirteen Grammar School, intent upon some instant deviltry. We trooped across the street. The boldest of us, with a pomp of manner befitting the circumstance, rang old Doctor Wilson's door bell. But one Friday afternoon, bursting with profanity, he whirled out upon us, and drove us down the crowded street. The four vanished; I was left alone. Behold then a frightened little fair-headed devil pursued by a terrible and blasphemous old creature on the open highway! Aisquith Street turned itself loose to enjoy it. I escaped, but dared not, for weeks after, walk on that side of the road. Sometimes I rang a door bell on my own account. There was a two and a half story house at

the head of Aisquith Street which had a curious appeal to the reprobate within one. It was too particular, too insistent and persistent with its polished knobs and glittering window panes. Every brick in the side yard looked as though it had been gone over with a scrubbing brush. But its mistress did not come out at my shrill summons. If she had, she would have seen a lonely small figure, with its books in its arms, and an air, practiced for such occasions, of belonging to another world beside this.

There was Shane's Pasture, a steep green place of many acres. If you stood on the top of the hill, facing south, you saw on the right the eastern walls of Greenmount Cemetery and on the left the back windows of the houses on the Harford Road. On April days I came here to gather buttercups. Could there be a more fairy pastime? Everywhere were they a-blowing, a-growing, cramming their bright bowls into the short, cool grass. Yellow, yellow, yellow. The field was full of flames. When the wind caught them, they flared all one way like candles caught in a draught. I pulled, and pulled, a little sad with the beauty of them, and the sound of the wind in my ears. If I looked up, there,

to the south, far off, an unknown city, its steeples rising in a mist, a cloud, a pearly glow. Other children were in the pasture on the same gentle errand. They sang, and chattered and pulled the flaming buttercups. And after a while we all pushed homeward, in twos or threes, or sixes or sevens, each with a golden store of April flowers. More than one window on the Harford Road was lit later in the day by a handful of buttercups in a glass or a spindly jug.

In winter, when Shane's Pasture was deep in snow, the boys in the neighborhood brought their long hickory sleds, and these, jammed with a shouting company, coasted down to the levels, far, far below. Often we took our lives in our hands. One lurch too much and we might all be lying in the bottomless hollows, stone dead. We never thought of this. We hooted crisp rhymes across the field to one another. We frankly exposed our legs, careless of our comrades, were they male or female. Down, down, down we flew to glory or to destruction. Up, up, up, we toiled, rosy, panting, eager for another straddle behind the broad back of some neighbor's son, for another clutch on his stout right arms. At daytime, Shane's

Pasture was ours; at night, it belonged to our elders.

Years after, and when my family had long lived in town, I attended my first political meeting; it was held at Waverly in the interest of the independent voters. There had been a break in the democratic lines, a revolt, due, it was said, to the trumpeted inadequacy and dishonesty of the traditional party in regard to needed reforms. The independents were called Potato Bugs, either because they were considered a pest equal to the entomological one by the orthodox, or a legitimate and necessary despoiler of certain abuses by their opponents. It was a name caught up in the fury of the contest which settled upon the malcontents and stuck, and created a thousand opportunities for the interchange of political repartee.

The reform movement produced much lively oratory. One night, I left my aunt's house—where I was spending a week-end—and in the company of friends, joined the crowd moving toward the platform erected in front of Bateman's Grocery Store. Here stood the Potato Bug orator. I was too young to have any particular party likings or dislikings, or any more than a limited interest in

reform, but this gentleman's defiance—I have forgotten the name of the man—shouted out in the frosty autumn air, his smart wit, his hard, effective eloquence, gave me an altogether new and fresh experience. It was one of the first times in my life in which the words of a speaker and the speaker himself appeared to be the same. The convincing integrity of both the man's thought and his speech was as apparent as the planets blazing sharply overhead.

"For my friends, you know that it is time for a change of administration. If the reformers are elected, they promise to give you a fair show, and honest government. They will not be respecters of persons. What they think they will say, what they say they will do. I come here to-night . . ."

It was a vivid and pictorial occasion—the dark behind, the flaring lights in front, the listening, enthusiastic crowd, the shouts, and through it all, the shrill, thunderous voice, so sure of itself and its village audience.

For the moment, we were all of us fervent Potato Bugs, on fire for purging and restoring the body politic. We cheered for reform; we cheered our Potato Bug comrade, outlined tall and black against the gas flame. We felt

wise, large, bold. Down with our scurvy opponents. Up with the only real and liberal Americans. The bank struck up the Star Spangled Banner. The meeting was over.

Yet although the new party worked disaster in the old and traditional ranks, it failed to capture the majority of votes. Caustic rumors flew back and forth through the city. A loud cry of fraud penetrated through the fog which usually envelops a political campaign. Much violent oratorical bludgeoning was indulged in by victor and defeated; there was talk of deals being made, bribes offered and accepted. Nobody could prove anything; it remained talk.

Again, many years after, I had a similar experience in regard to a man's power over individuals, the raw material for him to twist and turn as he chose, for that interval of time his and his alone. The occasion was the meeting of the National Democratic Convention in Baltimore, the year 1911, the place the Fifth Regiment Armory, and the man William Jennings Bryan.

My sister and I went early, and stayed to the end, too fascinated to think of rest, food or drink. Looking down from the packed gallery, it seemed to the spectators as though

the packed floor below was an enormous chess-board, and the supreme player Mr. Bryan, moving pieces—or men—one after the other, with a skilful and tireless hand, confident of himself, and the game, inexorably the master.

At first glance, from that distance, at least, Mr. Bryan did not appear an important or distinctive figure, an old-fashioned ranting circuit-rider, perhaps; at the second, he was the ranter still, but something different beside, more intellectual, more various, alert to a hundred interests instead of one, wary, tempered, expert.

One after the other, the delegates accepted the candidacy of Woodrow Wilson. No doubt many of them had intended from the opening of the convention to do so, but Mr. Bryan had stamped the acceptance with persistent and eloquent approval; they had been ripe for his harvesting. As we rose to leave the massed, waving company below, a man in the audience said, pointing: "That little fellow down there did it all. Look at him now."

Baltimore was the first city in the country where an organized company of professional actors, was permanently established. This

was on January 15, 1782. The opening play was Richard the Third. Boxes were one dollar, the pit five shillings, the gallery five pence.

A great number of Baltimoreans have always been theatre-goers. There were no prohibitions in my family in regard to dancing, novel-reading or attending the theatre, consequently from the age of eighteen, which was considered the proper time at which to begin your social diversions, I have been a consistent lover of the latter. Jefferson as Rip Van Winkle; Booth as Hamlet; Salvini as Samson; Janauschek as Lady Macbeth—what a jeweled experience was mine! Of the four artists, Booth, or so it appeared to me, was the most finished; Salvini with his fury and fire, and overwhelming passion, perhaps the least. Jefferson was flawless in a lighter, more comfortable, less intellectual way. When you had fashioned Lady Macbeth in your mind as a tall, slender, almost thin woman, of the Cassius type—lean, thinking, dangerous Cassius—Madam Janauschek's regal proportions obliged you to reconstruct your picture of the wife of the Scottish thane.

Interpretative genius, like that of the actor, has only the word of its contemporaries to

be remembered by. It is true that now-a-days the victrola may hold and produce each tone of voice, but all the rest remains oblivion. As an auditor, and not as a connoisseur, and in order to bring to memory again the fame of these four great character artists, I record my starry impression of their art.

Baltimoreans have always felt a sort of cousinly interest in the Booths, for Tudor Hall, the Booth home near Belair, is within an hour or two of the city. Here, in the wide-spread, gabled, slowly aging house, behind a thicket of trees, were born both Edwin and John Wilkes Booth. In the yards behind and the broad green woodlands everywhere about, the dark-haired boys found ample space for play; the younger carved the three initials of his name on a tree a stone's throw from the front door step. No doubt, being sensitive, romantic youngsters, a white bough at the dusk or a creak of the stair in the night had caused them more than one colored dream of a ghost without, or a grizzled robber within the house.

I once knew a woman who had been bred in the Belair neighborhood, and was bursting with all sorts of odds and ends concerning the Booth family. According to her, from

Junius Booth down to the youngest of all, there was something wild—and more than wild—about every member of them. She used to tell a most extraordinary story in regard to the head of the family. Once he told his wife that a package would soon reach her by express. When it was opened there lay the body of one of the children who had died in England! Of John Wilkes she spoke more than of the rest of his kin. He had strange eyes. He roamed the woods muttering to himself. Sometimes he waved his arms, and cried out in a dreadful voice. If, in his wanderings, he met anyone, he would stare at that person without seeing him. It was certain that he was insane.

In the spring of 1891, there was delivered the initial course of lectures of the Percy Turnbull Memorial Lectureship of Poetry at Johns Hopkins University. This lectureship was founded by Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull in memory of their small and much-beloved son, Percy Graeme, who died in 1887 in his ninth year. The founding of this course was one of the most beautiful, far-seeing things which had ever been done in Baltimore. For poetry, more than any other art, except music, has a compelling hold upon

the spiritual side of life. Out of the mire and clamor of material things, it lifts us to those not made by hands, eternal in the heavens. This lectureship was a recognition and acceptance of this fact. It gave the general public as well as the individual a chance for a real holidaying from the minute, careful toils of their daily routines and tasks.

The first lecturer on the course was Edmund Clarence Stedman, a Yale man, and his subject was "The Nature and Elements of Poetry," eight lectures in all, lucid with scholarship, rich wit, a chivalrous appreciation of all kinds and degrees of poetic literature, an unrestrained laudation of its values, its unassailable heritage and place. Mr. Stedman was one of the last of the line of cultivated men, as distinguished from the specialist of a later period and today. Cultivation, as defined then, signified a reaching out at life from many angles, an interest in the stones at your feet as well as in the planets in heaven; it was human, broad, flexible. But the times have become breathless, absorbed, hurried, and specialism has resulted, which moves in grooves, and is authoritative, impersonal.

Great men followed Mr. Stedman, Dr. Jebb, the Greek professor at Oxford, George

Adam Smith of Glasgow University, Brunetiere, Walter de la Mare. I venture to say that this lectureship has been one of the great spiritual agencies in the city. It has directed attention to Beauty. To know that a thing is lovely, is one experience, but to say that it is, another, and it is this public expression of a truth which has made and still makes the Turnbull course an incredibly effective means to an end.

Three times have I gone holidaying in England. Once in 1903 with a friend, I went down to Winchester to take the general chaise in the public square—it was not yet the day of the automobile—for the Hospital of Saint Cross. It was a stocky, blunt sort of vehicle, something like a sawed-off omnibus, resting loosely on four wheels. Inside, besides our two expectant selves, were a pink-faced country woman, carrying a wicker cage full of doves; a girl, not too young, exquisite of figure and complexion, who wore a confused concoction of straw, flowers and ribbons which the English women of that day considered a hat; and a fat, middle-aged man, with a cross blue eye, and a large, veinous nose.

To this vehicle were attached two frisky

beasts. The driver cracked his whip. Peaked roofs, dim courts, snug shops, crammed with prints, brass, and pewter; small old town gardens, so scarlet and so yellow with blossoms that they seemed to be going up in flames, flew by. We rocked, we reeled, we bounced up and down. The fat man muttered a comfortable thing or two which indubitably was not out of a book of devotion. Then we were out of Winchester; Izaak Walton's country, green, fast, hoary, lay all around us. Wheels, hoofs, no other sounds. We came to a lane; the chaise stopped and my friend and I slipped out.

The Hospital of Saint Cross, as everybody knows, was founded in 1136,—"to support entirely thirteen men, feeble and so reduced that they can hardly or with difficulty support themselves without another's aid." Three centuries later, the almshouses were established, and in these live the pensioners drawn from various sections of England; they are generally superannuated sextons or vergers, who each is provided with a house and three meals a day.

As my friend and I drew near the gate, two ruddy, Falstaffian looking tramps swung down the lane between the fields. No bite

of Saint Cross's wheaten loaves or sup of beer for either of us that afternoon; these swaggering gentlemen had taken the last of the thirty-two pieces of bread and the two gallons of beer, the Wayfarer's Dole, handed out at the porter's lodge each day.

We saw the church on one side, the alms-cottages on the other, a great square of lawn between, and behind and beyond the buildings the graveyard where the pensioners lie buried. Pink, gray, yellow, showed roof, and wall, and chimney. Two or three old men, each in his black gown, decorated with a silver cross, sunned themselves at the doors.

We walked across to the church. And there Brother Boyce, one of the beneficiaries and the verger for the day, fastened upon us, but whether because we looked more opulent, or more guileless, or quicker to distribute the American dollar, than the other visitors, we could not tell. Brother Boyce was "neither feeble" nor "reduced in strength," as the quaint words of the endowment read; he was long, slender, grey, with a voice strung on two notes like a Lenten chant.

We looked out of the west windows, and saw the rippling silver of the Itchen close at hand, the stream in which the sweet and

gentle Izaak had fished and which he had loved better than himself.

Brother Boyce paddled along, pointing to this, pointing to that. The chanting went on. "Look at that slab under your foot, ma'am."

We read: "Francis Francis, Angler, Author, Journalist," and then the kindly words of the greatest angler of all: "God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling."

He stopped again. A child's April name stared up at us from the stone pavement. We read that small Lewis Henry De Blois had departed this life May the sixth, 1867, aged ten years, "and," according to the rest of the exquisite inscription—"early rests."

Out in the open, Brother Boyce dropped his solemnity as though it were his verger's black gown.

"Do you see that gate over yonder, Ma'am? That's the gate to the burying ground. They bury us brothers there now."

He took us to his cottage, where in front, as in front of all the other cottages flamed a plot of heliotrope, white daisies, scarlet geraniums, and introduced us to his rosy granddaughter. He told us various details in

regard to the serving out of meats and other foods for the day.

Said Brother Boyce: "We get our meat four times a week, ma'am. Each joint is cut into four parts, and the fourth brother gets the smallest part. It cuts that way, ma'am. But"—Here Brother Boyce wriggled a solemn forefinger at us—"what do you think he gets beside, ma'am?"

We waited.

"The gravy, ma'am, all the *gravy*!"

Once, on the edge of Cheswick, that dull off-shoot of London, we came upon some more of these alms-houses. We had gone down one lane, and up another, and down still another, when suddenly, just before us, stretched the Strand on the Green. A piece of strange country, bordered by short willow trees, and dipping down into the Thames river. Running out of it was a court upon which were built five alms-cottages. Before each lay a scrap of garden with some late blooming lavender, the tallest we had ever seen in England. We paid a visit to one of the inmates. Each house contained a single room. In this, a bed covered with a counterpane stood in one corner, a chest of drawers in another. Some shelves holding an ancient

store of crockery were fastened to one wall; along the others hung little gay pictures from Bible and story-book. There was a stove, three wooden chairs, and a round table.

"So only widows may come here?" we asked the old lady.

"Oh, no, ma'am, sometimes a woman brings her man. There's one living at the last house now."

We gathered, however, that the authorities rather preferred the woman without the man.

"It's hard to get in," she said. "They wait their turn, and as soon as one goes, there's others to take their place."

We complimented her on her lavender; we praised her small, tidy, sweet-smelling room.

"Yes, ma'am, it's very comfortable. We don't complain."

Around the corner lay the Thames, silent and silver, two or three blackened boats drawn up on the shore. A row of quaint houses—the Strand on the Green—faced it. Men and women lingered gossiping under the willow-trees. Over all spread a sky of a misty blue, like that of a succory flower.

Many other sparkling experiences could I tell of my holidaying abroad: of a drizzly

night in Oxford, when the little rain and the blurred lights and the leaping towers made a dim opalline picture like that you see in a shadowed woodland pool; of the drive in a coach through the Trossachs with a half dozen Highland drovers, a little obvious after their champagne at the inn, and the superb tenor voice in which one of them sang "Bonnie Loch Lemond," the others joining feelingly in the chorus; of coming upon the cathedral in Carlisle and finding its close-cropped lawn turned over to a flock of sheep, a pastoral, not unfitting scene, with the roar of the bustling border-town all about it.

Just after the Great War, in the summer of 1921, I found England a very sad place. It was like going back to an old lovely house, and missing, continually missing, something and someone out of it.

But in 1926, there was a change. London was beginning to build, and in the country also new houses were going up. Two things—opposite perhaps, and perhaps allied—I noticed particularly in England during that vacation. One was that the women were expressing their opinions more freely and openly than before, as though a sense of their equality with men were coming upper-

most; the next, that they were dressing in better taste and with more style than on former years, evidently giving more thought to the material of the costume, as well as to the physical assets of the wearer. The general result was a distinct and pleasant contrast to the average feminine dressing of the early days of the century.

I think that at this time Mr. Cook, the secretary of the Miners' Federation, was the most hated man in England. It was during the great coal strike, and everywhere he was held to blame for its continuance. People explained this by saying that he was constantly going about delivering hot and unconsidered speeches, and in this way inciting the miners to still further obstinacy in the stand which they had taken. He had an office in a fine old house opposite Russell Square, with a shining brass plate let into the side of the door. He had also become the owner of an imposing mansion somewhere in the neighborhood of Harrow, for which he had paid a stout number of English pounds, and this, also, had become a matter for unfriendly comment.

Another man who was somewhat shorn of the former handsome opinions of the people

was Lloyd George. A Scotch gentleman inveighed bitterly against him, and insisted that Aisquith had made ready the machinery of the war—the guns, powder, and all the other necessary equipments—and then that the little Welshman had taken it all over and received the entire credit. He also loudly asserted that the various members of the Lloyd clan—especially the relatives and family connections—had accrued a considerable amount of wealth, and been slipped into positions of political importance. One relative held this position, another that. "Nepotism, do you call it?"

As I well knew that this was a not uncommon experience in American politics, I kept silent.

Over and over again I asked persons—some educated, some who unerringly dropped their h's—whether they would like to see the Labor Party back in power again. They invariably and emphatically said "No, No." One woman qualified her negative by saying: "Not until they're better educated."

"No," I said, "they have no traditions. Every government needs these. By the time the Labor Party gets traditions, it will no longer call itself by that name."

And everywhere was there a going back to the War. Once in the New Forest I came upon a small, bow-windowed shop on the one street, and went in for a cup of tea. I had this and strawberry jam and thin bread and butter in a corner by myself, and near a window, whence I could look out at the motor bus ready to start in an hour's time back to Southampton. The proprietor of the shop was a young, brown-haired, brown-eyed man, with a slow, easy fashion of speech. I told him that I had noticed quite a number of customers in these shops buying candy.

"Yes," he said, "we learned to like it during the war." Then he said:

"I belong to a village two or three miles away in the Forest, and when I go down there, on a visit, only one out of four boys I went to school with is left. All the others were killed in France."

"Yes, I know. I'm sorry."

He leaned across the counter. "I don't want to be ugly, ma'am, but I wonder if there would have been all this slaughter if you Americans had come in sooner."

I tried to explain the American pre-war difficulties and delicacies of the situation, the antagonistic forces at work, the lack of readi-

ness both in army and navy for any conflict whatever, least of all with a first class power. "And then," I said, "we had a schoolmaster for president. No doubt the theoretical side of the question presented itself to him first. A lesser man would have been more practical."

Once I sat on a bench in Exeter station and talked with two people from Wales. They were man and wife. She was a native of Devonshire. He had been a schoolmaster, but had given up his teaching, and now the two of them were engaged in a business somewhere in one of the small Welsh towns. I had been commenting on the rude manners of some of the Exeter station officials, and making a comparison between them and their like in Plymouth, giving as a reason for the difference that Exeter was an inland town and Plymouth a sea-port.

"It's bad to be away from the sea," I said.

"Manners are changed in Devonshire," said the rosy-cheeked, tall, middle-aged woman. "It was the war. They're grown so bitter, and so inhospitable. Time was—for I'm Devon born—when if you stepped into a farm-house, they'd insist on your taking a meal. You weren't allowed to leave

without it. But now they don't ask you to stay, and they don't give you a bite. They're turned bitter."

"The War," I said, "the taxes are cruel."

One Sunday afternoon in Canterbury I went down into the crypt of the cathedral to attend a service at three o'clock. The congregation, except for the visitors, was composed of the descendants of the Huguenots, who had fled from France during the religious persecutions of the sixteenth century. Queen Elizabeth had given them the privilege of worshipping in the Cathedral crypt.

The service that afternoon was an hour long, very simple, very apostolic. Every thing—prayers, hymns, preaching—was in French. It seemed odd to hear God called "Seigneur." The pastor, a stout, short, pale-faced man, wore a black gown with white bands. He stood, after the benediction, in the doorway and shook hands with each member of the small congregation. And as it was then, so is it every Sunday afternoon of the year. You leave the crypt, and go out into the solemn cathedral close, with the same feeling of continuity which is so natural a feeling in England. Centuries ago the crypt was crowded with the Huguenot weavers

plying their pleasant trade in the little shops in Canterbury. Nobler folk of their faith were there, too. But intermarriage, absorption into the Church of England, or some nonconformist body, or a natural scattering to other and larger towns, has diminished their number. Also hand weaving has given place to factory work. This service and a French name or two over a Canterbury shop window are practically all which survive from Elizabeth's day to our happier one.

I spent a week end in the summer of 1926 in a great house out on the border of the delightful old village of Hawkhurst in Kent. There was much to notice, to remember and to love; perhaps more than any thing else the walled garden keeps the most definite and secure place in my heart. It was early September, and the summer fury over, but there was still enough of color and fragrance, of sun and moist wind to make this the garden of gardens in all Kent. Michaelmas daisies—our field asters—in all shades of purple, from that of an emperor's cloak to that of the mist which hangs around a wood's edge in the morning; marigolds so afire with their orange or lemon that you half expected to be scorched as you went by; stocks, lavender, roses, the

last a little tattered, but closeting a June-time flavor. To walk down a path was to walk between flames; to shut the gate in the wall and stand without, was to shut yourself from something alive, of long and gentle growth, almost personal in its insistent, intense clutch.

Walter de la Mare has a garden in Buckinghamshire. It was blazing when I saw it first, the same purple, the same gold as in Kent, but near to the house, a smaller, more open space, exquisitely intimate. At dusk it was like one of his own stanzas, close yet aloof, a trifle sad. The tall, dark poet, one of the best-beloved men in England, walks you around it as though it were in Hymettus, too honied a thing to be kept to himself. When you get back to the door, which is in the side of the house, and overlooking a hill, he points out to you the towers of Windsor in the distance, miles away. It is like looking at a picture in a lovely dream.

Inscription for a Library

I who am thin with hunger,
I who need bite and sup,
Come to you with my platter,
Run to you with my cup.

Books

On Saturday afternoons my twin sister and myself, and two or three other little girls in the neighborhood, used to meet in Saint John's Church to hem handkerchiefs and listen to my godmother read out of a book. Handkerchiefs in that day were often bought by the dozen or half dozen in strings, each square when needed separated by a scissors from the others and hemmed on four sides. My godmother guided our clumsy little fingers along the stiff linen edges, and after such breaks in the afternoon's routine, kept on with her reading. She was a tall lady, with black curls hanging on each cheek; she had a low, musical voice. We sat, and sewed, and listened in the pew nearest to the door; the door was open; and the church full of shapes and many colored lights. Every wind in the world blew over the graves outside, and the sound had the same music as my godmother's voice. The two apostles in the east window were somehow of the texture of the moment,

of the music of the wind and my godmother's reading, and the homely sewing of linen hems; and all of them were incorporated into a secret, exquisite experience.

This was my first introduction to literature, for, although I did not know it, the tall lady was leading us along the path of good, sound English prose. Long before this, it is true, out of the pages of a flat gay book, I had been read the story of the fox and the sour grapes, the fox very red-brown, the grapes very purple, the vine incredibly grass-green, but Aesop's Fables are only an episode in the life of a child; my godmother's reading made literature an affair, a function. Other than this, and if you can call it teaching, I was never taught literature. Dates and data of all kinds in regard to authors, books, yes, but little more. I was never expected to analyze a character, or pull a poem to pieces —as one pulls a flower—or to explain the meaning of every word on a printed page.

Indeed, I have no recollection of ever having been taught to read. When I was a very small person I read almost as well as I do now. An uncle of mine on his way back from Germany, stopped over in England, and brought with him a great leather-bound col-

lection of London magazines: it was full of wood-cuts of ancient manor-houses, and of articles signed by names known to cultivated men and women of the day. I well remember the name of Elia, and that of Mrs. Brattle, whose simple and hearty opinions in regard to whist I swallowed whole, without understanding them in the least. Another writer by the name of Anon began to attract my attention, a voluminous writer, whose short and strange cognomen appeared at the bottom of prose and poetry alike: it was long before I discovered that Anon was an attenuated form of anonymous, and that anonymous meant unknown, and that word stood for an indefinite number of persons, and not for one alone.

Poetry I learned first of all in Mother Goose. Here were quackery and philosophy, laughing and crying, the crooked and the straight business of life. Here were herd boys, fiddlers, vagabonds, a hundred sceptered others. On one page was a king, on another a fool. That a dish should have legs, or a cow jump over the moon, or a man pitch into a bramble bush and scratch out both his eyes, was to an imaginative child—and what child is not imaginative?—the perfect, because the

proper, thing to do. And what distant, smooth-sounding names crammed my dizzy head—London, Banbury, Babylon! Into the musical jangle and jingle I plunged headlong, to emerge with a lyric deposit which has stuck to me through all my days. "Over the hills and far away." This was April, and dusk, and an endless procession of cloudy people going by and never coming back any more. "A misty, moisty morning." This was November weather in a word or two.

No matter that later I discovered that many of these rhymes were folk-lore or politics made pictorial, and roared up and down and all over the city streets; or smart, disguised thrusts at systems and people; or homely doings made dramatic; for instance, that Jack was the name of a leather bucket, and Jill the name of another, and that both were used in drawing water from a well. The work had been done; I was the possessor of a lot of primal poetry in a much-thumbed volume recited or read every day during the first half dozen years of my life.

There were stiles in the parish of Waverly. To press a chubby young body against the hickory bars, and revolve slowly and joyously from one end of the circle to the other, was an

entrancing pastime. That the errand on which you were sent had to wait indefinitely was of secondary consequence. The fields stretched close on all sides; the toll-gate house and Saint John's soaring steeple showed beyond the levels of grass; nobody was in sight. Around—and around—and around—

When I came upon the stile in Pilgrim's Progress, which I read at the age of seven or eight, the stile "on the left of the road" which led into "By-Path Meadow," it was not an unfamiliar thing to me. Were there not two of them in Waverly? But Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation, with his thick black wings hovering across the entire page of the book, was a terrible creature, "clothed with scales like a fish," his mouth "as the mouth of a lion"; the shepherds of the Delectable Mountains were grave and most lovely ones. The phraseology, too, was familiar. I heard its like daily in the Bible, and on Sundays in the collects and the psalter out of the prayer-book.

"Pilgrim's Progress" was a real, almost too real a book to me. I followed Christian up a hill, where stood a cross, and even now, when I read it, I feel that same sense of poignant exaltation which I felt at first, "when

his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in."

A child without an acquaintance of some kind with a classic of literature such as this, suffers from that impoverishment for the rest of his life. No later intimacy is like that of the first. Something gets hold of him then. Words fly over his head; some alight at his feet, and the cloudiness of the one, and the homeliness of the others are sucked down into the very blood and bone of his spirit. He has taken something into him which is forever unescapable.

About that time also I read Pickwick Papers, a shortened version full of pictures, a square, large book, comfortably adapted to impatient young knees. I at once fell in love with Dickens; I love him still.

Perhaps of all the most famous Victorian novelists, Dickens has the greatest number of easily distinguishable failings. Certain chapters of his, for instance, the one descriptive of the death of little Nell, are sentimentally, the worst in all English fiction. He straddles between reform and story-telling. He has a gay eye for rhetoric. Yet he remains. Is it be-

cause he gives us coarse, hearty, enduring life, which we swallow down and are refreshed as with a draught of his Gadshill brew of ale?

Dickens died in the early summer of 1870. I was barely in my teens and still at school when it happened. I heard the news at my grandmother's house, where I had gone on an errand. All the mile and a half homeward along the Waverly Road, I kept saying to myself: "Dickens is dead. Dickens is dead." A short-frocked, flaxen-haired, vehement creature, I hurried on, through the June weather, ready to cry both my eyes out because I had been told that Dickens was dead.

And his readers everywhere had that sense of permanent loss. For there was then a sort of family feeling between an author and his readers. It was due in part to their idea of the consequence of the individual. Robert Louis Stevenson—the joyous Louis—and Rudyard Kipling were among the last to hold the affection and perhaps the imagination of their readers. When the latter was desperately ill of pneumonia in New York, I remember how the entire country seemed to go about on hushed feet, with finger at lip. A sensitive woman whom I knew, seeing a church door open, went into the building, dropped on her

knees, and prayed that he would be allowed to live. At one of the literary clubs in Baltimore, on an afternoon when the reports from his physicians became reassuring, the whole assembly, told of these, broke out into applause.

Of course, I read Scott. He painted me two or three portraits which are still unclouded as to tint or outline. Elizabeth and Cromwell are essentially the same in Scott's romances that they are in the most inexorably modern of histories. Even the theorists, who, in straining at the gnat of some theory, swallow the camel of their subject's humanity, even they and their debunking contemporaries, have not succeeded in making these two characters anything but English and great. Scott's books have something of the quality of heather. They are storm-fast, with always a glint of king's purple for even the most wearied of readers.

I read George Eliot at first because it was my duty to do so. She was part of the conscience and the culture of the time. Her slow, taut English, her exact, too-careful analysis of character, her scrupulous insistence on the fact that you gather what you sow, were like the monotonous tread of coach-horses. She

wore well. Intellectually, if not emotionally, I grew to love her. She had fierce critics. I heard of a man who, dissatisfied with what he considered the spiritual deficiencies of Middlemarch, cried out, after finishing it, "My God, is that all!" Her stage is often too small; you get the effect of being packed in a crowd.

Few of her important characters ever really touched me, but Mrs. Holt, in the Lyons study, discoursing tearfully upon her Elixir and Cancer Cure, and Mrs. Poyser, a tart and voluminous lady, going her bustling way in her farmhouse with her mouth full of proverbs—may they last until the end and the end's end!

Thackeray was the great god of the century. We tumbled over one another in our desire to be the first to say a laudatory word. He has worn best of all the Victorians. My contemporaries and myself—all girls in the twenties—used gravely to debate the question as to whether, if we had been Becky Sharp, would we have flung the dictionary out of the chaise-window when leaving the boarding school! Not being artists, it never occurred to us, that this was the natural thing for Becky to do, and that her creator, being

an artist, had made her do it. We read everything that Thackeray had written; Henry Esmond was the favorite. Personally I could never quite grow accustomed to Thackeray's cynicism; it is at its worst in Vanity Fair, and I have not read the book again. It made me feel as though I were in a room filled with smoke from a long-disused chimney; mentally I smarted, I choked. As cruel an experience was mine after reading Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter. His sharp, minute, continuous tearing into bits of Arthur Dimmesdale's personality, leaving it broken, raw, and naked to the winds of heaven, affected me as much as had Thackeray's cynicism. In this instance I felt as if I had been—as hunters say—"in at the death."

Mrs. Proudie is Trollope's one, flawless jewel, the chief of female despots. We had never encountered her in a bishop's palace, but we recognized her at once by the click of her heels, the turn of her narrow head, by her small, gimlet-like phrases. Trollope has an almost unearthly faculty for divining the noble-ignoble motives which influence average humankind. When old Bishop Grantly is dying, his son the archdeacon kneels at his bedside in the deepest grief, yet through it all

pierces the sudden, worldly question: "Is it possible that I may be bishop in his stead?"

Jane Eyre was the unwitting founder of the cult of Misunderstood Women. After her triumphant appearance, processions of young, plain, tearful females began to trail their oozy way through the pages of other Victorian fiction. Jane had a stout heart; these cousins—many times removed—were ditch water. But afterwards, Shirley with her curates, was more to my mind. The curates were fools, it is true, but a fresh, inspiriting air blew through the book; there was a genuine smell of the country earth. But when I read Wuthering Heights, I went overroof, stair and cellar—to Emily Brontë. There is a book so great that it is startling. It is like the author: she, more than her sisters, felt the prickings of the modern spirit.

To reach any sort of comprehension of the Brontë genius you must get fast hold of two facts: the Celtic blood, the Yorkshire moors. Take one of the girls away from home, and she becomes moorsick. She was Haworth-bound. Every crevice of her being was crammed with the smell, the look, the sound of the northern uplands.

You walk a few rods out of some York-

shire town, and suddenly the moor clutches you. Have you ever seen the gorse in flower? Deeps within deeps of color. Mile after mile of flame, rushing down to the sky's edge. The gorse is yellow; the slender crooked pools are yellow; the bees make an interminable thick skein of sound. Look behind you. Every glitter of pane, and peak of roof, and square of chimney has disappeared. You are alone.

In winter, the picture is different; there is a doubled solitude. A vast expanse of cloud stretches overhead, and underfoot as vast an expanse of tattered shrubs, huddles of wind-crippled, wild trees, full of voices, grey-brown, mahogany-black, stone dead as to color.

Hardy is not to be mentioned in the same breath with the other nineteenth century English novelists, except Thackeray. His parish is Wessex; but is Wessex the world! Can any of us ever forget the picture in Far from the Madding Crowd of the fog and the farmfolk waiting in it for the verdict? I recall the battle which waged around "Tess." The vocabulary of both opponents and defendants equalled in variety and vitality that of Milton in his historic controversy with Salmasius.

Neither side had any sense of humor. Taking Tess as she was, by her blood and bringing up, the conditions and circumstances of her life, it would have been impossible for her to play her part in any way but what she did. I never loved Hardy's novels; they are unhappy books. Their beauty has a quake in it; on its edge sound the horns of defeat. The characters appear to be lashed, driven forward without halt, at the end of knotted whips, toward an inescapable doom. I wonder which of the two novelists—Thackeray or Hardy—will eventually overtop the other? I think, speaking as a reader, and not as a critic, that Thackeray has more universality and less philosophy; that Hardy has an overplus of philosophy; sometimes it gets in his way as an artist; at times he makes it his pulpit.

I knew less of Poe's stories than I did of his poems. They were, to me at first, only a series of interesting words, recording a number of interesting happenings. It takes a Gallic type of mind to appreciate the artistic value of Poe's prose, and I was not that, but intellectually Teutonic. I came to it later.

Directly after the Civil War there was a flowering of literary talent in the South,

which resulted in the writing of novels and short stories. Mary Murfree, of Tennessee, under the name of Charles Egbert Craddock, wrote of the Great Smoky Mountains, and of the folk living in their fastnesses, archaic of speech, poetically primitive. When it became public that she was a woman and not a man; when she quietly introduced herself, wearing skirts and not trousers, to the Boston editors who had published her work, the sensation was country-wide.

I read a good deal of history, not, I declare, in order to add to my hoard of facts, but on account of its connection with women and with men. I read Gibbons, Merivale, Motley, Macaulay. Outside of a dozen chapters of Gibbons, I cared for Macaulay most of all. He was pictorial; his rhetoric at its best had an emotional effect upon me like the sound of an organ pouring out of an open church door; his exaggerations pushed me along the road to the truth. Macaulay's inconsistencies were due to his being extravagantly human, and therefore at every moment interesting. Excess of logic turns a man dull. On the other hand, he was frankly a Whig: if his politics had been narrower, he might have made a fairer historian.

Everybody read Sartor Resartus, a crabbed, wise book, with the evidence of Carlyle's German browsings on more than one page. Carlyle was a sort of British Thor; when he thundered, people ran out to take a look at the weather. When his dyspepsia and his wife's nervousness became the public's and everybody's property, the knowing ones wagged their heads. "A peasant married to a lady," was what they said. Matthew Arnold with the pedagogical fury of his family, pounced upon every subject, as though it were an educative one. He shook it up and down, and to and fro, until the effect upon you was like that of a terrier with a rat. Ruskin, like him, allowed his art to follow his conscience. The wife of a distingushed editor once told me, that when she was a young girl, she always dusted *under* the ornaments on the parlor mantel piece, instead of only *around* them, and this scrupulosity she said she had learned from reading Ruskin. Emerson was Carlyle grown suddenly aristocratic.

And all of these essayists had carrying voices, and were reformative by the very make-up of their nature, and, it is probable, too, by the expectation and demands of the time. They wrote at the beginnings of the

machine period, when its first bellowings were upon them. The voices of the makers of ugliness sounded in their ears. The smart, the confusion, the loneliness of the age were almost too much for them. A good deal of the old loveliness was disappearing. That they lost the artist in the pedagogue was natural. They wrote much better than the critics who assailed and arraigned them; they had a sharp sense of the dignity of life; they exercised an incredibly strong influence, especially over the younger generation; and enough of them has been spared to prove them leaders, and the makers of sound and often very lovely prose.

One day passing along the street, I saw a thickish, slate-blue volume lying on a stall outside of a second-hand book shop, and bought it, and took it home. The book was "The Saints' Rest," by the great Nonconformist preacher of the seventeenth century, Richard Baxter. In the piercing, emotional fashion of the time it is an elaboration of the Apocalypse. "The poor man shall no more be tired with his labors; no more hunger or thirst; cold or nakedness; no pinching frosts or scorching heats." . . . "We shall no more look into our cabinets and miss our

treasure." Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying" I also read, and Thomas à Kempis' The Imitation of Christ, the latter a shrewd book, and what farther back would have been called comely. Newman I knew, but not so well as the others. Where Jeremy Taylor's eloquence was golden, Newman's was like steel, an incisive, tempered stuff. I read these books out of a lively literary curiosity, and became the wealthier in each man's religious experience, a simple thing in the case of the first three, and more complex and institutional in that of Newman.

I fastened upon every scrap of poetry which came my way. Shakespeare, of course. I was familiar with the sound of him long before I understood his meaning. There is often a sense for sound without a corresponding sense for sense. The latter in the reading of Shakespeare, enriched me afterward. Milton's Paradise Lost was parsed away from me. I have said, in the beginning of the paper, that I was never taught literature, but there was this one exception in the case of the impoverished teacher who put grammar above poetry.

I could never finish Wordsworth's Excursion, because it wearied me too much, but this poet grew on me, like the beat of the sea, heard

at intervals all day long in an inland place; when it ceases, the emptiness about is like a sharp personal loss.

And Browning? He was a perfect godsend to those people who loved to read what they did not quite understand. Browning clubs, established for the purpose of reading and discussing him, flourished in every section of the country. Some of the questions asked at their meetings were most extraordinary, such as: "What is the exact meaning of the stanzas entitled Meeting and of those entitled Parting?" As the answer was as obvious as the wind in the street, it was incredible that the question should have been asked. Incredible, too, was the number of persons, who were ready and eager to be instructed. Occasionally the secretary of one of these clubs, in response to the wishes of the members, would ask the question directly—in writing—of the poet himself, and he would invariably send back an explicit and courteous reply. Books were written about this or that phase of his philosophy, and were seized upon and studied by those who were determined to be cultured or die. It was like taking literature by the throat. A good many of us considered Browning's obscurities and his curious twist-

ing of words—practically one and the same—as an affectation, and that his wife was a much better poet than he was, if for no other reason than that she was simpler. She had a fuller cup, but her very intensity drove readers away from her, it was as though her self-revelations were too bare, too overpowering for them. Her Sonnets to the Portuguese are warm, melting, intimate, sacred pieces of song. As for myself, I liked Browning's stout philosophy, his fearlessness of death. I never understood his intermittent sense of beauty. It came and went. Was he partially beauty blind?

The Idyls of the King I read once, but its overelaboration, one of Tennyson's worst faults, deterred me from a second reading. There were too many words. But I could have been kept alive by reading or hearing read his Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington. Tennyson was master. In Memoriam is not only a human record of grief and loss, friend parting from friend, the falling clods, the closed grave, but of faith, hope, of dreams and the blazing of visions. It was published after Darwin's Origin of Species and had a steadying influence upon a vast number of people. I knew nothing of

the original controversy, but a decade or two after, its echoes were still lively. When a small girl I used to hear my elders talk of monkeys, and ancestors, and missing links, and talking of these go off into hoots of laughter. I do remember a controversy started by an Englishman whose name I have forgotten—in regard to the power of prayer and faith. What he said was about this: "Let everybody all over the world pray on Monday, but on Tuesday let nobody pray. Let us see then if things are no worse on one day than on the other, or are practically the same." People raved. One shot fired off was this: "It would be impossible to make such a test. Some old woman somewhere in some corner of the world would be down on her knees praying." What I learned out of all this was that people are invincibly religious. I was glad that Tennyson could both accept and reject, which, as a wise mature, speculative poet he was bound to do.

Baltimore is thick with the memory of Poe. For is it not here where he died, and lies buried under a simple stone in Westminster Churchyard? Never have I heard a Baltimorean confuse Poe's drinking of spirituous liquors with his lyrical genius. His Raven

was read away from me, just as long before Milton's Paradise Lost had been parsed away. An exasperating number of young persons at that period were taking lessons in elocution, and one of the first pieces which they tried out at private and public entertainments was the Raven. It is really a difficult reading; one step in the wrong direction and it becomes bizarre; it runs too near the edge of laughter. Outside of this poem I do not know the time when I have not loved Poe. Lanier, too, in another, older fashion. A robust singer, ample of speech, and rich of spirit.

Of the New England poets I preferred Whittier above all, and after him, Emerson. They had more to give. All of these men, although none of them were of the most important genius, were, with Poe, Hawthorne, and a few beside the planters of culture in their century. The field was stone-bound. Poe is safe in his fame, but these others, if they brought about some kind of a flowering, and left behind them a sense of beauty which had not been in the air before, are entitled for that achievement, to an honest fame. Any critic who tries to lessen it, is of that type which can not distinguish between a plain pine tree, and a cedar of Lebanon.

Many other books beside these which I have mentioned I read and some I re-read, and read again. All of Jane Austen's, especially Persuasion, with crisp little Anne Eliot —like Jane herself—walking through the rainy streets of Bath, with an umbrella over her head. I was particularly fond of William Dean Howells' Silas Lapham, the finest story of a self-made man in American literature. James's The Turn of the Screw still gives me moments when I shudder to see those sleek, evil faces pressed against the dusky window panes. Herbert and Vaughan, too, with their quiet Sunday afternoon beauty, and Christina Rosetti, and her brother—the latter the most imitated poet of all the Victorians—and Marguerite Wilkinson's Citadels, a book of great and exquisite mystical verse. And Shakespeare always. All of these writers, perhaps with one exception, practically belong to the formative period of my life; they were the roots of any cultivation which I possess; the inescapable somethings which formed and fixed in me a trick and then a habit of seeing beauty in common as well as uncommon things. They were the first and therefore exercised the most distinct influence

over me. For this reason I mention only these.

Some of the more modern writers I cherish as deeply as I do these, it is a deep deprivation to me not to set down their names and volumes, and say a word about their sincere, engaging selves.

But what of the inhibitions and prohibitions of the time? A novel was looked at aslant in many quarters; in other cases it was never opened on a Sunday. A foolish book was often mistaken for an evil one. Mrs. Emma Southworth was a harmless lady, who wrote silly, lumbering, over-wrought love stories, in which the heroine as a rule was as beautiful as Guinevere of Camelot, but neglected and imposed upon to a degree that would have astonished even the meek historic Griselda. At the end the husband—the villain of the plot—groveled at her knees in an agony of contrition. Or else there was chapter after chapter about a waif, also as beautiful as Guinevere of Camelot, but so preposterously virtuous that you had a tumultuous desire to launch something brittle at her head; the mystery of her birth was untangled, and she marched out of the church to the clang of wedding bells. The title of one of these vol-

umes—Capitola, the Hidden Hand, alone was enough to keep it from oblivion. These stories appeared week after week and chapter by chapter in the pages of the New York Ledger, whose publisher was the shrewd Robert Bonner; the sales of his paper were enormous. Mrs. Southworth was a joy, a very well in the desert to that type of romantic, poorly educated women—with no resources, stinted of amusements, perhaps—who at that time filled the position now held by the average female frequenter of the movies. If there were any hurt to her stories, it was due to their being unfair, because insincere, pictures of life. Young people read them when they could get hold of them—because they had been told not to. A word more. She had the old-fashioned writer's liking for setting her characters down to hearty, savory meals: to breakfasts of hot rolls, rice cakes, honey, smoking bacon and eggs, and coffee of a hue fit for the gods. Dickens did the same. "Now the tongue—now the pigeon-pie. Take care of that veal and ham—mind the lobsters; take the salad out of the cloth—give me the dressing," orders Mr. Wardle of the fat and sleepy Joe. Even Mr. Jerry Cruncher that honest tradesman, eating his bread and

butter and gulping down hot tea is almost a pleasant spectacle.

"The Children of the Abbey"—what a faculty there was for inveigling names—was one of the books mentioned darkly by our elders. Consequently, more than one young person would have walked leagues to read it. The name of the author is misty in my mind; I never read the book, but there is an impression, also misty, that it was what is now-a-days called frank, and most intolerably sentimental.

Huckleberry Finn aroused the fears of the over-scrupulous. One of my sisters took a copy to Sunday School, to lend it to her boys, and this simple action produced on the part of the father of one of them what threatened to become a riot.

In the windows of the stationery shops were arranged row after row of important looking paper backed novels, with raucous titles, the name of the publisher in a prominent space at the top. These were Beadle's dime novels, unpirated, purely American products, from which youth of both genders were warned as from the bottomless abyss of perdition; they were generally stories of the West, of pioneers, and hunters, and trappers,

of ambushes in the dark, and Indian fights, and hold-ups of settlement-bound stage coaches. Their settings were new and romantic; their men and women of unbelievable resource, strength, and courage, cool and ready in the most appalling emergencies. The harmfulness of these books—if they had any—was overbalanced by their wild sense of justice, a kind of manliness of texture. A boy, reading them, might run away from home for the purpose of killing a few Apache Indians, but he would never rob a bank, or seduce a woman.

The Victorians had a full cup and it spilled over. I think that this is the reason that their faults, worst amongst which were their overelaboration and sentimentality, are so apparent. They had so much material on hand, so much creative ability, that at times and too often they were mastered by them. If they had been poorer in either, they might have had fewer defects. Their conventions, also, were really a part of their ideals. Their initial thinking was straight, but somehow in many cases grew twisted toward the end. There was a very madness for instruction. To judge their poetry and prose a critic must have historic sense, and a sense of humor.

The nineteenth century was a revolt from the eighteenth: it had become careful in its manners, and reticent in its expression. It must be judged not by any overflow or exaggeration of genius, but by the genius itself. The novelists must stand by their creation of character, which is the decisive test of the artist, the poets by their perpetuation in word and phrase of beauty, that readjuster of the changes and chances, the confusions and the rancors of life.

Saint John's Bell

All the village in the dusk
Crashed with music. Everywhere
Strange bough set in the strange grass
Rocked in the pale air.

A window flamed. And one was black.
Not a wind was out.
Carefully the villagers went
Hearing God about.

Schools

SAINT John's Parish School, where I began my teaching, stood, as it had done for many years before, on the edge of its churchyard, on the York Road, in the small village of Waverly. It was a pictorial building of stone, with brick facings around doors and windows, the grey and red grown meek with time, and the common happenings of the weathers. A great grassy lawn stretched in front and another behind it. A wide, honey-locust tree, thick-boughed and delicate of leaf, reared itself just at the church door, and a row of maples along the fence of the garden next to the school. It was the autumn of the year 1873 when I first came to Saint John's; the leaves were falling; the air, the paths, the levels of lawn and churchyard were deeply yellow; a sort of glow hung everywhere, which the wind stirred, and let alone, and stirred again without sound. Whenever I think back to that time, I always see Saint John's standing there in the autumn, in the

colored leaves, with that soundless wind blowing all about it.

I was seventeen years of age, my frocks just lengthened, my blonde hair just put up, raw, eager, dreamy, fond of young people, and with the gift of authority. The last two were my chief and best assets, for, of the theory of teaching, or whether there were any, or the necessity of such a thing, I knew nothing at all. Fourteen or fifteen children, boys and girls together, each a new, fresh, indeterminate creation, provided me with the material upon which to try my ignorance and inexperience. It was bound, you say, to turn out a most desperate failure? In the matter of saving time, or the setting of work,—varied minutiae of teaching, yes; in some other part of the careful business, no. I taught them to read, write and do simple tasks in arithmetic, and much more than these—the fact that I was there to do my duty, and they were expected to do theirs. I was fond of them and they were fond of me. I knew every child in my class. I might say that the genealogical tree of each was as plain to me as the honey-locust by the church door. I knew the tempers of these children's mothers, and the convivialities of their fathers. When a little

hazel-eyed daughter spilled ink on her figured calico apron, and cried because she thought her mother would whip her—(a commentary upon Victorian justice)!—I sat down at my desk and composed—aided by my Celtic ancestors—a sweet and serious note to her parent, and thereby staved off the prospective punishment. When a pampered small son, curly-headed and piratical-tempered, and of the stupendous age of "going on five," took to the Waverly hills bright and early one morning, his family hailed me from the front gate, imploring and expecting me to bring back to his slate and primer this interesting little devil. Each day, between half past eight and nine, a body-guard, consisting of one boy, generally plump, cotton-headed Charley Deal, met me a long way down the York Road, and escorted me, to the tune of his continuous chatter, to the school door. New chickens, new puppies or new babies and the like were the chief subjects of his limited experience. I became familiar at last with the very shelves in the Waverly cupboards. I went to see the parents during the summer vacation, and though it is likely that my extreme youth encouraged many a smile behind my back, I

made friends with them. Their children, greyheaded, still remember me.

Going to church was not compulsory in the school. On saints' days those who wished to attend, walked sedately with one of the teachers—there were only two of us—through the churchyard, and along the rows of graves by the side of the gnarled path, and so into the dim-lit, beautiful church, and presently came walking back in the same fashion.

I do not think that the churchyard in any way affected the imaginations of the pupils, of Saint John's; it grew too familiar a thing. There was nothing sad about it. It was always, even in the dead of winter, when the winds roared over it, a green and pleasant place. In June there blossomed by some of the mounds—the most worn and sunken, as a rule—a certain white-yellow rose, most fragrant as to perfume, and wax-glossy of leaf. But it blew and prospered its short week in June, and never a child thought of stealing across the sunshine to pull even one petal from its ancient, brier-like bush.

It was out of this leisurely period that the Tramp began to emerge. From one man, he grew into a thousand. His goings and comings, his appearings and disappearings became

county-wide. He was thin and short, and dark-complexioned, and showed himself in the dusk at back doors, when only the women were at home; he took the scraps of food which were given him, and watched secretly from behind the slit in a curtain, would pitch them headlong into the dust of the lane outside. He was tall, red-faced, and in a voice threaded into a whine, asked for the car-fare to Baltimore, where he intended to search for work, all through the whine holding out his broken mire-encrusted shoes, one after the other, in proof of the long country miles down which he had traveled and begged. He was steeped in tavern liquors and rocked in his walk; he was as austere as an apostle, and infrequent and saturnine of speech. He became not only legend, but legion. Every gap in a hedge, every hollow in a road belched forth a tramp. Of course, this man or these men were only the outrunners of that great army of their unemployed comrades, which was beginning to alarm publicists at this time, or else the congenital beggars and wanderers well-known from year to year, but grown bolder because of the confused attitude of the community during a dwindling prosperity. The children brought raucous tales of one or

the other every morning to school. Never a dusk came on without long moments of feared yet delightful expectancy. Then presently everything began to revolve around, to centre in a single, lonely figure, that of a silently stepping man, who slipped to the door any hour of the day, and begged for one thing, and one only, and that was a cup of coffee; for this reason he was called the Coffee Tramp. Instead of this simple preference on his part making him a more every-dayish, explicit creature, it turned him, in the eyes of the parishioners, into a more inexplicable one. For what wild reasons, what deeps within deeps of mystery hid behind those cups of the common, country-brewed beverage? Saint John's, as represented by my fifteen pupils, hurled itself upon me before school and at recess with spirited stories of his having appeared here, and disappeared there the afternoon before. Yet I never heard a complete description of this ubiquitous and extraordinary vagrant. Many a time in my mile and a half walk down the poorly settled York Road, and into the lane running along Greenmount Cemetery wall, and so to the Harford Road and home, I wondered whether I would catch a glimpse of the silent-footed wanderer,

but in vain. Although rumor set him down in my own neighborhood, he remained a mist, a shadow, a swift shape, without hue or substance.

After two years of teaching at Saint John's I was given a position at old Number Three English-German School, one in which English was taught during the half of the allotted time, and German the other half. It stood down on Trinity Street, in the old Fourth Ward, not far from the Philadelphia and Wilmington railway station, in a neighborhood already beginning to show signs of dull and unhandsome age. And yet, if you turned a corner, and walked a few squares west, to old Exeter, or High, or Front Street, you came upon a mellow, a different Baltimore, ancient, it is true, but with a brave gentility, an air of something lovely, which had once belonged to each, but had gone. There were good names in these streets. They were quiet places. Here was a liberal doorway, with stoutly panelled oak doors, and there a side garden full of cool grass and high shrubs, and in summer a vivid flower or two, hemmed in by an important iron railing. Up on High Street lifted a lifeless tavern, its battered sign-board, faded to a poor cinnamon, swing-

ing on the yard's edge, and in that yard a covered wagon, perhaps, standing in a corner, the owner of which—a Baltimore county farmer, with the ample ruddiness of his calling—eating a belated breakfast in the sad house. On Front Street near Gay, rose another of these diminishing hostelries, to which the countrymen, bringing their butter, eggs and vegetables to the Belair Market close at hand, still came for meals and a night's lodging. This was a brisker, more vital, altogether a more modern-looking place than the former; there was the stir of horses and vehicles in the straw-littered yard; as you went past you caught the sprawling sound of men's voices or the whiff of comforting pipes. Directly opposite, with the thin air of a second-class house of entertainment about it, stretched the historic Front Street Theatre, an uninteresting, stiff, dull building, in spite of the reds and yellows of the billboards at its gaping doors. Gone was the time of its great actors, their memories but a handful of purple and tatters. It was a ruined thing.

Number Three School, as I have said, belonged in the Old Fourth Ward, a section of Baltimore which took its politics, as it should have taken its religion, as its most satisfactory

personal possession, necessitating a seasoned eye on its enemies, and an expert knowledge in regard to the handling of revolvers. It cultivated repeating at the polls, until this became, instead of an offense, an art, and the stuffing of ballot boxes a rigorous game full of humors, as well as penalties. Election days in the ward were notorious. The wild and single idea which appeared to dominate them, would, if expressed in words, have run; "Wherever you see a head, hit it!" Scared householders stayed within doors. Pistol shots sounded now and then all day long. More than one stout, unwashed fist struck out vigorously for the reigning boss, and the prospective distribution of spoils and rewards. When the dismission hour arrived, we teachers walked carefully out of school, and carefully along the street—the sound of the waging battle in our ears—praying for a quiet and unmolested passage home.

The school was filled with pupils of German extraction, children or grand-children of German immigrants, whose religious creed was Lutheran, and whose church towered across the yard. The building had been the parochial school attached to the church. The Baltimore authorities had taken over both

pupils and building when the public school was organized. But for many a day the children bore the old Trinity Church stamp. Certain mornings in the spring they would pour into the rooms, each a little solemn, perhaps, with their Bibles under their arms, fresh from the confirmation lessons next door. As time went on, however, accessions from other parishes began to appear, and occasionally from non-German quarters; the system became established, and this resulted in the eventual abandonment of the parochial institutions.

There was discipline in these German homes, and therefore a comparatively easy matter to obtain in the classroom. A word to a father or mother, or to some other responsible elder, would generally settle the matter of impertinence, or disobedience, or truant-playing at once and for the future.

The work was difficult. All the English at first was crowded into what was practically a half session of the school time; eventually music and drawing as well as German were put into the curriculum of the teachers of that language, and the requirements of the others were lessened. As it was, everyone at any time engaged in teaching in an English-Ger-

man school, was well-equipped to accept a position in any other educational institution. He had learned through the hardest of experiences to economize his time, to lay emphasis only upon the essentials in his instruction, and also that the interest of both teacher and pupil is held and promoted by reasonable and not by lengthy periods of instruction.

It was in the spring of 1876 when I entered Number Three School. A few years later a new, much larger building was provided for us, on East Baltimore Street, near Aisquith Street, and thither accordingly we were removed. It was a modern structure, for its time, well-lighted, well-heated, a welcome contrast to the stove-warmed, steep-staired, narrow, inconvenient building on Trinity Street. The change was most necessary, as the number of pupils had increased at a most astonishing rate.

And was it only the teaching of the German language which increased the number of pupils in this school, and others of like character throughout the city, and kept there those who had entered several years before? Yes. But as time went on, I found, by examining my records, that often, when a child, on account of change of residence or some other

sufficient reason, was transferred to another public school, as likely as not it was to a purely English one. Germans are the most thrifty of people and eventually the mere sentimental attachment to their mother tongue was not strong enough to militate against a system so much more efficient and financially firmer than the ancient parochial one. The children became Americanized; the parents, also; little by little the foreign language was dropped from the curriculum; the English-German schools became as purely English as the other public schools of the city.

A few years after my establishment at the Baltimore Street building, the first of the Russian Jewish refugees commenced to pour into the city; the streets in the nighborhood, especially Lombard and Pratt, rapidly filled up with poorly nourished men, women, and children, the latter entering the large, new-built, important Number Three.

A widow lady by the name of Wiesenfeld, who lived in one of the fine old houses across the street, constituted herself a veritable Mother in Israel to these forlorn people. She fed them with hot soup out of huge tin boilers, standing all day long on her kitchen stove. She saw that they were adequately

clothed and warmed. Any hour of the daylight you could see her walking briskly, her grey skirts billowing around her stout knees, the dark purple ribbons on her black lace cap flying straightly about her, upon her errands of mercy. She was not a young woman, she was not a handsome woman, but the kindliness in her eye, her inherent and responsive friendliness, gave her the real affection of those of her own creed and race who knew her the best, and the undoubted respect of every Gentile. It was a heavy hour to the community when she died. As the time for the funeral drew close, a throng of people, most of them her grateful, old pensioners, arranged themselves on each side of the doorway. When the short, plain, bare coffin—for strict Jewish custom would not allow a single flower—was carried to the hearse, they stood and watched it in silence. There were tears in their eyes.

The historian Macaulay says somewhere in one of his pages that unaccustomed liberty is at first like what the unaccustomed drinking of wine is to those suddenly let loose in a vineyard. They become intoxicated, but as days go on, the taste of the tempting stuff becomes familiar, and they settle down to moderation.

The foreign elements, first the Russian, then the Lithuanian and others, went through this experience: the primary teachers of Number Three and the other public schools had a delicate and trying task at the beginning of these invasions. Repression had naturally turned into a sort of lawlessness.

From the Teutonic side came occasional instances of bullying. There was Schneider, a native of Baltimore, if I recall aright, who selected as his victim a boy whom I shall name Salzberg. Salzberg was a new comer, born in a foreign country, and of a naturally docile, almost saccharine disposition. Added to this, the fact of his stammering, rude English made him an easy subject to his wily tormentor. If he had been as fluent with his speech as Schneider was, ten to one he would have been as effective a warrior. I suppose that psychologists would say that his balky English gave him a feeling of inferiority which rendered him physically helpless.

One day he came to me with a complaint.

"Schneider he keek me down stairs recess."

"Every recess?"

"Yes, mees."

I considered the matter. Being the daughter of an ex-Confederate soldier it was alto-

gether impossible for me to understand this pussillanimity. If I had been in Salzberg's place, I would have descended upon the bully with the fury of a rebel guerilla band. Little would have been left of him. Presently I called Schneider before me and delivered my ultimatum.

"Schneider," I said, "here is Salzberg. Salzberg, here is Schneider. Now Salzberg," turning to the latter, "the next time you go to recess, I want you to let Schneider kick you all the way down stairs. But when you get out in the yard, pull off your jacket, roll up your shirt sleeves, and lick him as hard as you can. If the principal comes by, stop long enough to tell him that I have given permission, and then keep on with the licking."

Schneider looked at Salzberg; he looked at me; and again at Salzberg. That was the end of the matter.

Teaching is an anxious and harassing profession; you sow, and see so little to reap; you are always apparently giving more than you receive. Yet there are unexpected harvests, sudden wealth; the field turns fertile, the wallet becomes full. There are also the hilarities of the situation, delightful expressions of ignorance, which could well be taken for pre-

meditated wit, but are due either to inadequate teaching, or the cerebral blankness of the pupils. The tests given periodically were the chief sources of this enlivenment.

A certain stock question in the old-fashioned geography ran somewhat in this way: "How do you divide the various races of the world in regard to their standards of civilization?"

The answer was: "Barbarians or savages, half-civilized, enlightened."

But the genial superintendent who held the position while I was still at Number Three, conceived the idea, so he told me, of "getting them to think." He pounced upon them with the question arranged in the following manner: "Name three kinds of people in the world."

Every child in that particular grade in the public schools in the city of Baltimore went at the answer with a fervor truly apostolic. He had been asked to name three kinds of people in the world and three kinds the superintendent should have although the heavens fell and the lands were carried into the deeps of the sea. He searched his callow experience, he combed his native community for stirring and spectacular examples. One child of a

romantic temperament expressed his well-considered opinion that they were "tramps, chipsies, and kittenapples." After brain-racking attempts to explain the final word in this sentence it was discovered to be "kid-nappers." A child with a catechetical turn of mind answered: "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." The superintendent himself handed me the most perfect jewel of the entire collection. It was: "There are three kinds of people in the world—ladies who have husbands, ladies who want husbands, and ladies whose husbands are dead." The neatness and indisputable veracity of this statement singled out the boy who had made it—I am quite sure it was a boy—for a future position where the dexterity of the diplomat and the accuracy of the scientist would alike be necessary. All Baltimore—at least that part which was in the secret, rocked and roared. It sent us—this joyous affair—back to that classic answer, which a child in East Baltimore had given to the demand: "Put the word phlebotomy into a sentence." She did. The result was: "My aunt had a phlebotomy and the doctors came and cut it off."

I wish that I had kept a diary of my teaching days, especially of these stretches of sun-

shiny weather, these participations in Falstaffian cakes and ale, instead of calling on thin shreds and scraps of memory. Often the notes which reached the classrooms were delicious spurts of genius. A father, angry bebause his son was not progressing in his studies, would indite a brief but piercing epistle worthy of an incipient Bolshevik; a mother, conniving at and condoning her daughter for some breach of discipline, would bring all the child's ancestors forward to swear to her absolute, because hereditary, impeccability of character; multitudinous were the reasons given for absence. One of my little girls stayed at home, and hurried to the drug store —so said the note—to call upon somebody by the name of Manna. It also stated that Mary had had a headache. Stripped down to the barest skeleton, and divided properly, the sentences resolved themselves into the facts that Mary, having a headache, had gone to a drug-store for a dose of senna and manna; which she had taken; consequently and naturally her absence. A teacher in a distant section of the city received an apologetic communication written by the father, which asked that Christiana would "please be excused" for her inability to attend school during the

past week, as her mother had had a baby. "Please excuse, Teacher, it won't happen again."

In 1897 I left Number Three to accept a position as teacher of English literature in the Colored High School on Saratoga Street below Charles. Here I spent four years that were amongst the happiest of my life. The pupils, with few exceptions, were the picked flower of their race, gentle in manner, eager for knowledge, respectful to those in authority. Teaching was difficult. The pupils were much less mature than white ones of the same age. They had no background, no traditions; the field was pitifully sterile; mathematics and kindred subjects, except for the very few, were practically impossible. The spelling was enough to make angels lament. But it was a delight to listen to the singing classes, and to make one of the audience when the school gave dramatic entertainments. The players took their parts with such gusto, such abandon, that it was like reading the lines over in a new and stronger, more refreshing light. For the negro's faculty for imitation amounts to a form of genius; it is along such lines that he is most surely himself.

As a rule, the mulatto element in the school

was the more intelligent. Words and their disturbing distinctions, however, troubled them all. I used to give one of my literature classes Addison's poem to study, beginning:

"Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale."

Imagine the slap in the face which I received when the second line appeared as follows:

"The moon takes up her wondrous tail!"

The funniest sentence ever manufactured was—as I remember—faultless as to spelling and grammar, but historically a fizzle. This gem was handed in to a teacher of etymology. "Medicine. The Pope recovered from his illness after taking the medicine administered to him by his mother-in-law."

Many of these children—for we teachers considered them such, although some of them were twenty-one years of age—were handicapped by the poverty at home. Their parents made sacrifices of all kinds in order to keep them at school, and they, on their part, responded by scrubbing, sewing, or nursing on Saturdays, or after school hours. More than one girl was a careful and fashionable

seamstress and made her own clothes, and—for pay—those of some neighbor; more than one boy did porter's or watchman's work in a shop or office in order that he might buy himself shoes or a winter coat.

I was sorry to leave these lovable pupils, but the School Board decided to remove the white teachers from the colored schools, and fill their places with faculties made up of members of their own race. This was in 1901; I was transferred to the Western High School, and assigned in the autumn of that year to a position as teacher of English literature and composition.

A complete reorganization of the Baltimore school system had taken place. Some positions were abolished; grades, with grammar and elementary, were combined under one principal; the curriculum of each was gone over. And at this time college graduates, particularly those from Goucher College, began to appear on the teaching force. A closer alliance with Johns Hopkins University, through lectures and courses upon pedagogical and other subjects, was formed. And were these changes, these upsettings, these rearrangements of benefit to the public schools of Baltimore? On the whole, yes.

Nothing is perfect, and there were mistakes made, but the growing complexities of public affairs, of life itself, necessitated a system fuller of subjects, an increase of vocational teaching, an attempt to combine cultural affairs with those commonly considered the more practical. This was an immeasurable distance from the day of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The simplicity of those times appeared to one looking back, almost appalling. Without a doubt, they were more human. Mass production, standardization, and their unmistakable elimination of the individual create brilliance, almost unnatural alertness, but also hardness and insensibility. And always and everywhere—rush, hurry, breathlessness, and curiously few leaders! And the schools suffer from these tendencies as do the churches and society, and individuals themselves. Teaching, along with preaching, has grown increasingly difficult.

When I began my work in 1873, the current opinion in regard to education was this: you go to school to prepare yourself for life. When I entered the Western High School in 1901 it had changed to this: you go to school in order to prepare yourself to make a living. The emphasis had been taken from being and

laid upon getting. The means had become the end. The matter of discipline therefore had suffered. The instant attention given to rewards, the little to punishments—and the consequent diminishing of the masculine qualities, especially that of justice—all tended to produce and continue this state of affairs. Under such conditions and circumstances education became, as I have said, an increasingly difficult matter. The revulsions had been too fierce to allow a normal, leisurely rearrangement. Its friends were often stupid, its enemies unfair. That it was doing a vast work in spite of both was proof of its inward honesty and soundness.

I retired from the public school service in 1921, rounding out a continuous teaching of forty-five years, the last twenty at the Western High School.

I shall always be deeply thankful for having been a working woman among other working women for so long, for having been a part of the common lot, for reaping experiences which a thousand others were reaping alongside of me; best of all, for making and keeping a good many secure friendships. And I must say here, in humbleness of heart, that I relinquished my task with the same formu-

lary with which I had commenced it in 1873. It was: that the pupils were in school to do their duty, and I was there to do mine.

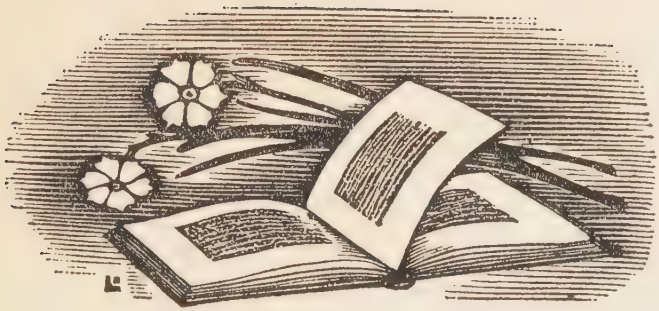
I could fill hundreds of pages with the names of noble women and men who served their state and generation by doing exceptional work in the teaching of young people. I have already mentioned Laura V. De Valin in another chapter; I have two more teachers in mind; the word to apply to all is that gallant one of gentlewomen. Pamela A. Hartman was one, a fearless, sound, cultivated woman, with a dignity which was like a kind of shining, and a courtesy, so simple that it was almost childlike. She was eighty-odd years of age when she died, but we teachers in the Western High School never thought of her as old, because she was interested in life and in us, in gilt-banded platters, and books, and a new flower for her bonnet, and the thistledown of gossip drifting hither and yon, and in the public matters of church and politics. Another one was Imogen George, as fearless, as courteous, bright, witty, with a lilting quality of mind and character. Her girls learned English literature because they loved her. Her gay, light, crisp speeches were handed down from one set of pupils to an-

other, until they became assured traditions in the department of English. I never think of her without seeing her with Herrick or his like abroad on some pleasant April highway, greener even than Devonshire.

A teacher's work is not obvious; it is often obscure; it is not set to the blare and flourish of trumpets. He takes the raw material and kneads it as a baker kneads dough; oftener than not it turns out wholesome bread for the needs of the community. He is the maker of destinies in the commonwealth. Public school teachers, more than others, on account of their superior numbers, are doing both of these necessary, little regarded tasks. Take state instruction away, and there would be a tumbling world, black night. In passing a public school building, every American citizen should feel like uncovering his head, in salute to those within who are spending their span of years in the nobilities and sacrifices of this spacious, most ancient of professions.

A last word. If, in any fashion, I have troubled the stagnant waters of ignorance, and out of that troubling, brought a livelier sense of living; if, to be plain, I have in any way made a success of my teaching, it all goes back to that gray parish school of Saint

John's, in the village of Waverly. It was here that I was tested, and found out what I could do, and here hardened my mental and spiritual fibre. I see it now, as I write this final sentence, fifty years away, standing in a soundless wind, the autumn leaves falling thickly around it.



Herrick

This is the fellow they sent down
To Devonshire, a scold, a wag,
With a verse book in his bag,
And his vicar's rusty gown.

Flame of flower at Devon sills!—
And he broke into a sigh
To think how soon a day goes by
For Herricks and for daffodils.

Rest his soul. For since that hour,
In a country song made fast,
Saved by his own singing, last
Herrick and the Devon flower.

Poetry

ABOUT a stout half mile away from the toll-gate, and sitting back a good distance from the York Road, in a high, smooth-shaven lawn, rose a brick house, painted a lifeless grey, a house of many windows and a steep roof. I used to pass this twice a day on my way back and forth to Saint John's school, and in all these days, although tenanted, it looked vacant, sad, and alone; never was there a sign of man or woman about it. And as it was in the days when Tennyson's poems were in everybody's mouth, I called this house in my mind "The Moated Grange" after his poems about Mariana of the lone grange. The real Mariana, as you know, lived out at Saint Luke's near Vienna, but Tennyson made the house an English one; no doubt he had seen its like more than once in his own Lincolnshire. That in the York Road was neither of Vienna nor of Lincoln. There were no "broken sheds," or moat "with blacked waters," no poplar sighing in the

wind, "with one black shadow at its feet." It was then that I wrote my first poem—in contradistinction to some scribblings which I had done before—and called it by the name of "The Deserted House." The only points it had in common with the York Road house were silence and solitude. I had in mind, too, the Viennese grange of the dejected Marianna. It took me weeks to write this poem, to select words or eliminate them, rubbing it up here, or letting it alone there, until in a sense it was something like what I wished it to be. Then I showed it to a beloved friend, Miss Laura V. De Valin, the teacher of English literature in the Eastern High School of Baltimore, a woman whose robustness and dignity of character had brought her the lasting affection of her pupils. One Saturday morning, both of us a little tremulous in regard to the matter, she went with me up East Baltimore Street to the office of the Southern Magazine, the editor of which was William Hand Browne, a cultivated Virginia gentleman, and an ex-officer in the Confederate army. We were introduced, and he promised to read the verses and tell me his opinion of them. It happened that he liked the poem so much that he asked to have it

printed in a forthcoming number of the magazine, and here it appeared in June, 1874. I can still remember the delight which shook me when I saw my name staring at me from the bottom of the broad magazine page. I received no remuneration for these stanzas; it was as much as the publishers could do to pay the firm's expenses, and prepare each month a certain number of pages for their all-too-limited number of readers.

I realized then, as I had realized before in the preparation, a short while back, of my themes in school—that composition for me was a most difficult task. My thought was quick, the picture in my mind clear, but the expression slow in coming; it was always a hard process to make my words as vital and as distinct as my thoughts and my pictures were. I have never understood the expression in the Bible—"the pen of a ready writer." I used to dread—and love—my week-end composition in school: I knew it would take me a day to do the work for which my comrades took only an hour or two. The result was that when I taught theme work to my classes in the High School I had a well-founded sympathy for those to whom the art of composing was hard, and

an almost absolute lack of understanding of those to whom it was the opposite. There is always the impressionist type of writer, to whom the first mode of expression is emphatically the best; no revision is necessary; but to the other type revision is a matter of necessity, otherwise the composition will halt half way to an artistic presentation.

I kept on with my writing. I tried stories for Sunday School papers, essays for school journals, and poems, poems, poems. The last I mailed to various weekly papers and ephemeral magazines throughout the country, as far North as Cambridge in Massachusetts, and as far West as Chicago and St. Louis. Only a few of these were worth saving, and these few, in addition to others which I wrote for the especial purpose, were published in my initial volume of verse, under the title of "A Branch of May." Just immediately before publication, an article dealing with my work, and quoting some of these poems, had appeared in the old *Christian Union*, and been commented on by the Baltimore *Sun*. The writer of this article had seen some of these fugitive pieces, and considered them worthy of a two-column notice.

"A Branch of May," containing thirty-

three poems, appeared in the spring of 1887, the publishers being the old and long-advertised firm of Cushing and Bailey on West Baltimore Street, Baltimore. The expenses of publication were ninety-two dollars for three hundred copies, bound in very pale grey cloth and lettered in gilt. Some twenty-odd were mailed to the various editorial offices and to literary men and women. A hundred of my friends had each subscribed for a book; the price was seventy-five cents a volume. The other copies, perhaps a hundred and seventy-five, were also sold; after paying all the bills, I had a few dollars left over.

The reviews appeared promptly. Either because it was a slack season for poetry, or because the pinched little dove-colored volume, being a small thing in itself, attracted attention, I can not tell, but there were many reviews, and they were in general laudatory. One reviewer called me "a poet by the grace of God." At first I could scarcely believe that these warm and beautiful things were being said about me; I had so often thought of that small book with trembling of spirit, that this unexpected praise was bewildering. I used to run with the notices to my mother, and read them out aloud to her, and her cool

acceptance of them did much to keep me from growing heady. If I had done my best, it was no more than I should have done: why should there be any undue commotion made over the matter? A Victorian recipe for prospective conceit! I had done my best indeed. The maples turning crimson in spring were those hanging over Greenmount Cemetery walls as I passed by; the daffodils running along the short grass those in my grandmother's York Road garden, the brightened pools of water after a rain, the cherry-tree breaking into its second flowering—in autumn down some Waverly lane—were all loved and most familiar to me, and I had tried so hard to make them as lovely to other people as they had been to myself. Out of the thirty-three poems in this first book of mine all but two were quoted either in whole or in part.

I had mailed a copy of "A Branch of May" to Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman, at that time one of America's most important literary men. After a due period, he wrote me a very kind and sympathetic letter. From this started a long and firm friendship, with an infrequent correspondence and an occasional visit, first at his New York house in Fifty-

seventh Street, and afterwards at the one on a hillside in Bronxville, which suburb had lately been developed. Everybody of consequence as artist, novelist, poet came back and forth to these unlocked, cheerful doors, raw young writers like myself, seasoned writers, and old, eager friends ready to renew past companionships. It was like one of those gay and friendly London mansions in the flashing eighteenth century. At one of the small receptions I met Edith M. Thomas, whose classic poetry had made a distinct name for her throughout the country. She was a fine, small creature, with dark, dreamy eyes and a head which was delicately and shyly shaped like a faun's. You would not have been surprised at any moment to look up and see her vanishing out of sight. We all knew the story, of her life, in a small Ohio town, Chatham by name, and of her coming to New York in order to try her fortune as a poet. One very gray and rainy day, she appeared at the threshold of Helen Hunt Jackson's house in her little wet waterproof with a package of Ms. under her arm. It was from this that her literary career began, for Mrs. Jackson was so wrought upon by some of the material in this fortunate package, that

she introduced the young poet to the editor of one of the great monthly magazines; after this, her public was sure. She once wrote me a letter in regard to my poetry, and warned me against expressions like "a-blowing," "a-growing," and also against too frequent a use of the carried-over line. Frank Dempster Sherman was there, a tall, Chesterfieldian, handsome man, who taught mathematics at Columbia University, and wrote artistic light verse in his leisure hours. He said: "If the editors don't pay you enough for your poetry, just tell them so. Send back the checks." This sounded like mutiny to me. There, too, I met Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, for so long the editor of Saint Nicholas magazine for young people. She was a stoutish, fair, pleasant looking woman, a widow, who had lost her two sons by drowning. She used to visit the children's wards in the hospitals and read to the small, pathetic patients. And there also was William Young, playwright, deep-eyed, tired, reticent, and John Albee, a summer friend of the Stedmans, who looked so extraordinarily like Nathaniel Hawthorne, that it was as though one had come back from the dead.

In 1891 I published my second book of

verse, "A Handful of Lavender." This book included "A Branch of May"; the publishers were the Houghton Mifflin Company of Boston. In 1896 the same company published "A Quiet Road." Then followed a silence from 1896 to 1909, nothing new being presented to the public until that latter year. I had nothing to say, except at long intervals, and therefore did not try to say it. In the meantime Mr. Thomas Bird Mosher of Portland, Maine, having taken over my earlier volumes from the Boston firm, began to publish them in his exclusive limited editions. I owe Mr. Mosher much in the way of gratitude for keeping my name and work before a too-easily forgetful audience. In 1909 was presented my first book of new poems published by Mr. Mosher; the title was "A Wayside Lute" and it contained on page sixteen my best-known poem, "Tears." I have been questioned so often in regard to this fourteen line poem that I feel that here is the place in which to answer every inquiry at once. I wrote the sonnet, as I remember, the early part of 1899, and mailed it, with another, to Mr. Bridges, editor of Scribner's Magazine, where it became public in November of the same year. It immediately received com-

mendation. What was the reason for my writing this sonnet? I have no explicit answer ready. It is true that my father, long an invalid, may have been in my mind, but I was never conscious of this, for people, continually in ill health, are in a sense the last ones whom you connect with dying. My father, however, died very suddenly in July, 1899, and the check for "Tears" arrived the day on which the crepe was hung at the door, a few hours after his death. This is all I can tell about the matter.

The teachers of the Western High School, with which institution I had been connected for twenty years, my friends, and the alumnae of that school, conceived the idea of perpetuating the poem, and my connection with the English department, by a suitable tribute of stone or metal. A bronze tablet, inscribed with the poem, and executed by the sculptor, Hans Schuler, was the result. On May 15, 1923, it was presented, in the presence of a good many of my friends, to the school. Doctor C. Alphonso Smith, head of the English faculty of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, delivered the address. When, a few years later, the school was removed to its new building on Gwynn Falls

Parkway, the tablet was transferred to the wall of the entrance hall, in full sight of every passer-by.

Whenever I think of this tribute, of this tablet made fast in a place familiar to so many young people, it warms the very cockles of my heart. It stands as a practical acknowledgment and recognition of the fine art of poetry.

In 1920 and 1923 were published two new books of verse, "Spicewood" and "Wild Cherry," by The Norman, Remington Company of Baltimore; in 1926 my Selected Poems by The George H. Doran Company—now Doubleday, Doran and Company—of New York, and in 1927 "Little Henrietta," my first long poem, by the same firm.

I once had a small cousin by the name of Henrietta Matilda, who died when almost six years old rather suddenly of diphtheria. I remember distinctly her sweet, round voice and her intensely blue eyes. I think that her death was the first realization to me of the fact that there is such a thing as death at all. Other people in the family had died before, but they had been mature and old. She was young, and I was young. It was a blow. Years and years after, in 1927 to be exact,

and even before, I had written some stanzas recording the death of a little girl. This child became not only my small cousin, but the universal child, the one who had died, or who was dying every hour in all parts of the world. I tried to trace the beginnings and the loneliness of grief in a normal human being, who, overwhelmed at first, and rebellious at heart, eventually accepts the bitter experience, and in faith and trust, awaits an everlasting restoration. Grief, in its texture, is the same, whether of a mother or a child; it goes through the same processes, from rebellion to acceptance; it is different only in degree. I have put into this poem the old places familiar to me in my youth, and in a much lesser degree, familiar to the little blue-eyed Henrietta. The hawthorn is there, the old Waverly house, the Old York Road, the solemn levels of the churchyard, idealized, of course, but true and real in the main, and as seen through a mist of years. And in all these later volumes as in the earlier, the shepherds, the cherry-trees, the flowers in the lanes and gardens are the doubles of those once known and loved. As in one of the first books the shepherd is the careful tender of sheep on the hillside of a Baltimore park, so

the wild cherry in one of the later is the tall tree which grew on the side of my grandfather's orchard, and blossomed every spring into a small, fine, clear white. I have put it into an unfrequented lane, that is all.

From the very beginning of my writing verse, the critics have insisted upon the English setting; but the setting is pure Maryland, nothing more. Parts of Maryland are very English in look. The Joppa Road, in Baltimore county, is in places strangely like a road in Buckinghamshire. The rolling country around Green Spring Valley brings to mind certain airy uplands in Devonshire. One of my poems, "A Pastoral," is a description of the peach-blossoming in Kent County, Maryland, and not in Kent, England.

And all these years in which I taught in the public schools, and in my leisure hours wrote, I made acquaintances and friendships with literary men and women, some through personal contact, some through correspondence. Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson I met at my cousin's in Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts. He was a gallant gentleman, erect, graying, young-mannered, who had fought in the Civil War. Thomas Bailey Aldrich, the poet, and long the editor

of the *Atlantic Monthly,* wrote to me that he considered the Shakespearean form of the sonnet the weaker one, because of the last two lines, which, to his thinking, spoiled the music of the other twelve. Trusting to his ear, which was scrupulously musical, and to my own, I decided that partly, at least, he was in the right. The other forms of the sonnet have been my favorite ones ever since. At another time he wrote: "I am sure your Muse will have many lovers, though one or two are enough to keep a Muse alive from year to year."

Louise Imogen Guiney corresponded occasionally. Hers was a full, pure lyricism, with the edge of the classic added. A virginal wind ran through her verse. She belonged by temperament and choice to the seventeenth century. Her letters were as gusty as herself. "I know nobody in your town now," she wrote, "but I have always warmed to it on general principles; so please salute its stones for me." She wrote: "I would like to share with you my own spirits, which are always more than alcoholic, and sufficient for several lives." She had a notion that I, too, belonged to the lilting days of Herbert and Herrick, so she wrote: "I guessed well long ago, did I

not, when I had no data to support the guess, that you were a lover of our Old and Best?"

Harrison S. Morris, poet and art critic, and for years editor of Lippincott's Magazine, once sent me a letter in which he quoted a line in one of my poems, of which he was very fond, the line being a description of the daffodils in an ancient garden, "lighting their candles in the April grass." From this started a friendship of many years. His crystal-clear judgment often proved of much practical value to me. How many comforting days have I spent with him and his wife in their house at Jamestown, opposite to Newport—a house with the sound of the sea in it and the friendly Pax Vobiscum cut into the stone at the doorway!

James Whitcomb Riley came to Baltimore occasionally on business trips—the reading of his own poems—and we met more than once at the house of Mrs. John D. Early, a mutual friend, on Park Avenue. He was a real, sweet-spirited body, with a cidery sort of humor, not sparkling enough, but almost, to be called wit. A word and he would be off. He read his poems beautifully; you felt their herby, country atmosphere as you sat there in the crowded public auditorium, or

occasionally with a few picked others in the parlor of a friend's house. His books had an astounding sale, and everywhere he went, no matter how brief the stay, he became beloved. I wondered then, as I wonder now, whether dialect verse has any chance of survival. Is it not in many instances a rather small exploitation of the crudities, emotional and otherwise, of a halted education?

Richard Watson Gilder of the Century Magazine, was a dark, short man, with a face full of drooping lines; his idle manner covered a good deal of secret energy. He spoke gleefully to me one day of a poet whom he had discovered down in New Jersey, a mother, who had lost her little child, and out of her grief and loneliness, written a line or two which proved the universal spiritual experience of all true writers of poetry or prose.

"I wish," he said, "I could think my own new book were truly poetry. How strange that one can put one's whole life into a book of poems, and only at happy moments be sure that it is poetry at all!"

I have one or two letters from Madison J. Cawein, the Kentucky poet, a rare nature, whose "Rain Crow" is one of our scattered classics. He was an anxious man, for life

had been cold to him. He once wrote: "My position—which is very confining and the very opposite of the beautiful—tends to the retardation of the poetical faculties rather than their stimulation. However, my life is in poetry, and even if I should desire to do so, it being one with myself, I could not divide the one from the other without destroying the mechanism of both."

Josephine Preston Peabody was a young, passionate, flower-fresh thing, quick with praise, eager with friendship, in love with life and all its happenings. When she went, it was like the withering of a white familiar quince tree. After an illness she wrote: "So late and long-windedly I thank you, as I had been meaning to thank you (but for these dizzy contrasts of pain and glee) *long* ago—for your own latest delicious volume, which I'm proud to possess."

An afternoon which I spent with William Dean Howells remains a genial memory with me. It was in the summer, and he was staying with his family in an old house a few miles out of Boston. We sat on the porch or walked under the wide trees to the end of the estate, and back again; we talked of poetry and Southern literature, and of our

common tie in the fact that we were both of Welsh blood. On the maternal side he was German, as was also I. I asked him why he had given up the writing of poetry. He said: "It gave me up." His encouraging words steadied many an uneasy young writer. He introduced the great Russian masterpieces to the American people. Approachable, catholic, whimsically humorous, he was one of the last in the tradition of beloved authors, one with Scott, Lamb, Macaulay, Stevenson.

One of the lecturers on the Turnbull Poetry Foundation at Johns Hopkins was George Adam Smith of Glasgow University. His lectures were confined to the poetry of the Bible, and he refreshed for his audiences the words which had grown so familiar that they had somehow produced in them a stale, unresponsive attitude, like that of taking for granted the people whom you love. He was a fair-haired, bright-complexioned man, with a speech whose natural eloquence was so balanced by learning and a knowledge of life, that it was an instrument as fine and flashing as though made of Spanish steel.

There was always a reception at the house of Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull—one of the founders of the lectureship—on one evening

during the stay of these lecturers. And sometimes attending it, came a tall, elderly man, growing old gently, by the name of Richard Malcolm Johnston, once colonel in the Confederate Army, the author of some delightfully bright, fresh, and whimsical sketches of Georgia life. I remembered him from the time that I was a small girl, when he used to come with his boys to Saint John's church on Sunday afternoons. His school bore the name of Pen Lucy, the last word the name of a daughter who had died when quite young. A gallant, liberal soul with the pleasant drawl of his native Georgia in his voice.

Here also came Dr. Daniel Coit Gilman, president of the University, with his shrewd, ascetic face; Dr. James Bright, the Anglo-Saxon scholar, a lover of poetry, but shy in the telling of it; here, too, Sir Walter Raleigh, eager, delightful essayist; and the broad-shouldered, leonine, flashing Dr. Basil L. Gildersleeve, prince among Greek pedants, with a face which blessed those who looked upon it. Once I broke upon the latter's quiet with a copy of my first book, "A Branch of May." One of the poems goes by the name of "Anne." Here follows part of a bubbling note from him:

"You don't ask me what I think of your poems. Well, to ask what I think of your poems would be very much as if Anne had asked her middle-aged lover what he thought of her eyes. Doubtless, being a diffident man, he would have answered that he was no judge of eyes, that he had not studied anatomy, was rusty in optics, and was hopelessly color blind. Unasked, he said as you have told us:

'Her eyes be like the violets
A-blow in Sudbury Lane.'

I am a diffident man, and your poems are like Anne's eyes."

Here came Cardinal Gibbons, spare, bent, smiling, with his flash of scarlet; and the eloquent Dr. Maltbie Babcock, his strange eyes full of dreams.

When I think of Mrs. Lawrence Turnbull, who, with her husband founded the Turnbull Poetry lectureship at Johns Hopkins University, I think of all those things which make this world a satisfying place and not a futile one. A lover of poetry, herself the writer of several well-wrought historic novels, she was the spirit of these assemblies, hostess and woman of letters in one. How well we who loved her, remember her, this slender—

not too tall—brown-haired, brown-eyed, exquisite gentlewoman!

And what about that other poet, who, with Poe, has left a permanent memory to Baltimore? I have no recollection of ever seeing Sidney Lanier. He died when I was a girl, not long after the opening of the University. Yet all the years since I have been listening to the story of his poverty, his illness, his surpassing faith and courage in the face of both. I knew his wife. I have read the letter that he wrote to a friend in town in which he told of his making the ultimate decision to be a poet and not a musician. The music of his flute, and the memory of the flute-player, still linger in Peabody Institute. His grave lies in the Turnbull lot in Greenmount Cemetery. There are ivy vines from Georgia planted in the Johns Hopkins campus in honor of the Georgian poet; and every year in that institution on his birthday a commemorative meeting is held. Some forty or fifty people, on the same day, come for an hour or two to Old Saint Paul's Rectory, upon the same tender business. How Lanier himself would love this mellow house! How he would love to hear Doctor Kinsolving, the rector, read his Marshes of Glynn in his

steady, rich voice, or his favorite tune played on the flute by Mr. Fred Gottlieb, a member with him of the old Peabody orchestra! Later in the year, when the flags in the rectory garden show in gusts of cloudy violet, he would find in both a spur to life, as does tall Sally Bruce, the rector's wife.

I have set down in this chapter only those poets or authors who had some contact with the earlier years of my life. Many friendships have I made with the younger poets, and am happy and proud to feel and know this. I turn to something much different.

Revolt is as usual a thing as is a planet to the heavens, or the falling of the leaves to the autumn. Usual, too, are revolts in the province of Art. Its representatives become arrogant, and this produces opponents with a like arrogance. This was the case with poetry. Abbreviated, and obsolete words, trite, or unauthorized rhymes, age-worn rhetoric, monotonous forms often characterized the poetry of the years preceding that of 1913, the start of the free verse movement. Tennyson and other poets had called repeated attention to some or all of these faults. Poetry had fallen into ruts. It was in the hands of martinets, of its cheap lovers. Amy Lowell, who con-

stituted herself reformer and innovator, had the carrying voice necessary for the part of either or both. Her fearlessness and honesty were indisputable assets to her followers. She was poetic, but not seriously a poet; some of these followers were neither, and these conceived that free verse was a short cut to publicity. The term free verse was untenable, for verse, like all Art, is under the law; its only liberty comes from that. But the movement, when it had spent its initial force, had succeeded in shaking up and revigorating the traditionalists; this was worth every blow struck in the battle. Miss Lowell may be remembered in a line or two as the chief exponents of free verse theories; her fame is fast as the biographer of Keats, for whom she had a life-time, a deep, and understanding affection.

Time and time again I have been asked: What is the case of poetry to-day? Judging it by the new books which I read for reviewing and otherwise, it is most certainly flourishing. The general excellence of the volumes, in regard to their precision of phrase, and the carefulness of their rhymes and rhythms, make them a welcome experience. Yet there is often evidence of a disturbing

ignorance of older poetic literature. Is this due to a poverty of traditions? Or a conscious turning of the back upon them?

There is a lack of feeling. Is this an affectation? Or paucity of emotion? Or a passing spell of shamefacedness? Is it a sign of immaturity? Or of not having an assured position? Or, summed up in one word, a seventeenth century intellectualism?

A coal scuttle is a useful household article, but not all the hierarchies in the world can make it an interesting, and therefore a poetic one. It belongs to the uses of the kitchen, not to those of Art. A common thing, but not one which is only commonplace, strikes the universal note. When in doubt about a word, use a common one. An herb in a fence corner is perennially beautiful, as is the way of commonness. From this lack of discrimination, of the deep, discerning eye, arises the very modern apothesis of the ugly. Ugliness is put on a pedestal. Words are wrenched out of their usual context and applied to subjects for which they are most inadequate. It is playing upon a cracked instrument. For when a verse is ended, should it not leave behind it a sense, if only a faint one, of loveliness?

These characteristics, sometimes one, sometimes another, are true in a lesser or greater degree in too much of modern poetry, but there are such gracious exceptions, a book here, a book there, so glowing with life, so steeped in artistry, so complete with color, that it overbalances the others, gives joy in the reading, and profound faith for the future. And may not all these defects, as are other perplexing ones of this time, be due to a dearth of a sense of humor? Or else, to a fear of not being considered modern?

The world is a difficult world at present, but so was it—and if you read Hamlet, you will find it out—to Shakespeare. Art is always in a bad case; it thrives upon it. Make its lot too opulent, and it dwindles. Better had it run back to its dish of herbs, its cup of cool spring water.

What do you think of the magazines, clubs, and classes formed in the interest of poetry?

If the fundamental object is to attract attention to the Art, or to bring together those who love poetry—those who are simply lovers—to hold intercourse, and to talk with full hearts about their beloved, or to hear others do the same, they serve a laudable

purpose. If they become means of instruction, exploitation, commercialization, of smoothing a way to the public, then they become indubitably futile. Art, like life, is hard. The poet, like any other individual, must work out his own redemption.

What do you think of the craze for publishing the work of youthful poets?

Childhood, it appears to me, should be allowed to keep its April inheritance, otherwise it is defrauded. For a child its dreams, expectancies, the throbbings and aches of its short experience should be sufficient. To force it to express these in concrete form, and in the flare of publicity is both an evil and a stupid thing; it results in over-maturity, and therefore in self-consciousness, an obtrusive smartness, and eventually a blankness of ideas. If children were turned loose upon toys, instead of books—or a very few of these—and upon the outdoor world, they would be better able to go through with this growing-up period, a delicate and disturbing process. If a child is born to be a poet, the good God will see to it that he becomes one. It is not right to rob him of his April. Is it not noticeable that all these young poets belong to one sex alone?

The last question is always this: What method do you employ when you write your own poems?

I taught forty-five years in the public schools of Baltimore, and the requirements of the profession left me little time in which to sit down at a desk with pencil and paper, and fall to the business of composition. When I had the spare time, I was too tired to do it, I learned instead to compose both poetry and prose in my mind, stanza by stanza, paragraph by paragraph, before I put it down in writing. I grew so expert at this that sometimes I could carry almost a whole page of a poem or a story before committing it to paper. It grew into such a habit that even now when I have leisure, I must have the exact words which I wish to write all intact in my brain before I venture to trace them with pencil or pen. This is the only method, if it is such, that I know anything about.

A word more. Beauty is a constant thing. One loveliness goes, another comes. Wherever there is beauty—no matter what the century—there also is the poet.

My Mother's Meadow

What was I yesterday that I am not?
What am I not that I was yesterday?
Week-long I saw, I saw and yet forgot
The tall wild-carrot, the road's width away,
Harry my sills. But now I shake and cry
At its rich scarcity of flowering,
At its thin wealth, the color of a sky
Spread lightly with the papery mist of spring.
What was it yesterday that took me far
From this most lovely thing? Whence comes
the sight
That makes me seize it, add it to my store?
Oh, I am hurt and sad as lovers are
With these frail acres, gone so strange with white
This white that sets me stumbling to my door.

My Mother and My Father

WHENEVER I think of my mother, I think of gardens and of daffodils. She loved gardens; she loved daffodils. If she stuck a root or a bulb into the ground, up it came, and blew, and grew, and prospered. Her neighbors' roots and bulbs might come to nothing, rot in the dark clods, or straggle into a few, pindling, plaintive leaves, but hers with their punctual white, or scarlet, or purple, flouted this sterility on the other side of the hedge. This was of much satisfaction to her. Was it magic, or love, or divination as to the proper course to follow which brought this ancient business to such a lovely conclusion?

Once a friend of mine sent me a lavender bush, a short, withered thing, from down Cambridge way, on the Eastern Shore, and my mother planted it deep in the grass plot in front of the house. It became at last almost as tall as a tall lilac bush, and at the end of every June broke out into hundreds of pale violet flowers, whose fragrance was blown through the whole house, and to which

the bees came from the corners of the neighborhood, butterflies, too, like bits of white or dim yellow lace swaying over the spear-like bloom. This lavender was one of the delicate triumphs of her life. She used to sit out on the side porch, and listen to the admiring ejaculations of the passers-by, on their way from church, or to the shops, and retail it afterwards as though it were part of some ecstatic state affair, or a matter of great and intricate national concern. Alas, the bush was tried too hard one perishingly bitter winter, and in spite of its cover of dead leaves and rich ruck, died down to a sad bundle of dried, chocolate-colored sticks! It was one of her few failures in gardening, and it affected her as though it were the loss of something out of herself, or some wreck done to her lively heritage. She never afterward tried to raise another lavender bush.

She loved daffodils. There was always the twist and turn of spring weather within and about her, expectancy, eagerness, an airy moodiness; she moved in a mist of adventure. She was gay. Many frets, and hurts, and anxieties had been hers; she had lost her sons; it was not until middle life that the exigencies of a fine poverty were lightened, and cir-

cumstances became so easy that she need not measure each dollar against dollar. And some of these experiences had been of a bitterness which would have trampled down to the clods a more trivial, less opulent creature. But her gayety survived, being bone of her bone and nothing else. Almost until the very hour of her death, a certain half dozen light-hearted stories in the family, worn lean at the edges, which she had a passion for telling, made her, in the telling, go off into billowy laughter, the tears running down her cheeks, and the rest of us swept along with her, as though upon a surge of mirth and abandon. She had no especial sense of humor beyond this; at times her moods were such that a small matter stretched into a very great one, and a trifle towered to such a height that it practically overpowered her. We used to remember her billowy laughter, and wonder at this imaginative revulsion. If we left the house, and failed to return within the time we had specified, she would see us, with a scared eye, the victims of some swift and barbarous accident, already sheeted, tolled for, prayed over, put to bed. When we reached our doors at last we would find her pacing the rooms, in a whirl of dread and forebod-

ing. Such a reasonable thing as the difference in clocks or the delays in trains was entirely and absolutely incomprehensible to her. We acquired the habit, therefore, of not setting any particular hour for our reappearing after visits, or marketing expeditions, or the various junketings down the bay or out into the parks.

A brightly-tinted platter or dish of any kind would make her happy for hours. She rarely went shopping, without bringing home some piece of crockery, either imported or otherwise, to which she had taken a swift and settled fancy; her friends knew this and often came like the Greeks with gifts. A diminutive square table in her bedroom was filled with odd cups and saucers and the like, of delicate greens, or blues, or whites, or a dash of scarlet.

As she grew older no other lady of her age in the neighborhood was ever allowed to wear more expensive or more fashionable raiment than did she herself. If occasionally this happened, up would go her fine nose. In the near future, something new was purchased or something old made over into a dazzling new. A heavily ribbed silk coat of hers down to her heels, and embellished with flat crochet

buttons was like a challenge, the throwing down of a glove, to her contemporaries in the intimate, half-country streets where she lived for the last twenty years of her life. This was not envy or jealousy on her part—or very little at that—but an exaggerated sense of beauty made over into a personal one. She loved beautiful things, and she loved to possess them for herself, and to be the primal possessor of them.

Detective and all other stories containing mysteries and headlong adventures were the type of literature which she best appreciated. She considered these the most interesting, and her measurement of every scrap of literary effort was by its interest, a theory sound enough to commend itself to the critics. She was not invariably in love with the heroes and heroines, but she always wholeheartedly hated the villains. Any punishment, from boiling in oil, drowning in sacks, to hanging on a gallows, meted out to the latter, was a circumstance of most profound satisfaction to her; she not only believed that people should reap what they sow, but was anxious to be on the exact territory at the moment of that grim harvesting. She was neither a narrow nor a severe woman, but as concrete

justice in her experiences in life had often been a failure, so she expected it all the more in books, as the authors had it in their power to dispense it. The happy ending never dismayed her; artistically it might be all to the wrong, but spiritually it was all to the right. It will be gathered from this that my mother's idea of literature was moral, and not intellectual; I do not think that she could have been called intellectual according to any strict acceptance of the work. And yet she had a distinct and certain sense for language. Sometimes, when in doubt about the rendering of a worrying line in a poem that I was writing, I would ask her to tell me which she considered the best combination of words for my purpose; she would immediately respond with the most artistic selection; and the reasons for this selection were the significant ones. Her judgment in some other matters was almost infallible. We went to her as the last resort. Her intuition also was as trustworthy as her judgment; what she said about a person was true in the saying. We might modify it on occasion, but the essentials of the truth remained. There was something almost unearthly about these faculties of hers. To my

father in particular they were of much moment.

She seldom read a book herself; it was our privilege to read to her. Once in a while she would let loose memories of her early childhood in a small German town, and these were more pictorial than anything in any book. They were like the most delicate of etchings, so clear in their black and white, that they gave you the impression of a warmer color. A street, a grey stone house, a spreading orchard; this was where she had lived. A little bonnet, pink and blue, with crimped and artificial flowers: this was a gift of an affectionate godmother. A great church, filled with children, each holding a lighted candle in the hand. This was Christmas Eve in Saxony. A lumbering, obese, tight-hatted gentleman; this was a tyrannical, hated, unsavory Grand-Duke.

Her impatience was perhaps her besetting offence. The peach must drop down at once off the wall into her mouth. Any delay, and the flavor was gone. If you told her of something pretty, or useful, or unusual which you had seen in a shop window, she desired it avidly and at once for her especial possession. If you had any errand on which to go, or

any engagement for dinner or the theatre to fill, she would hurry you out of the house as though otherwise disaster would overtake you. If an engagement came her way, she was ready an hour beforehand. She hated to wait for people or conveyances. But all this is only another way of saying that she was excessively nervous; she had never been more than fairly well or vigorous all her life, and this impatience was largely a manifestation of that.

Of her religious beliefs she rarely ever spoke; it would have abashed her to do so. She had a deep sense of the dignity of life, and religion she considered a part of that dignity. Would it not be a shabby and belittling thing to discuss—as you would the chops for your supper—the most secret secret of your experience? She was cheerfully dubious about some ancient matters in the catechism, or connected with the hard orthodoxies of her youth; she had little feeling for the priest, but a most affectionate one for the church. She was as sure of God as she was of the sun. There never came a fine day, winter or summer—and she loved fine weather, as she loved every beautiful thing—that she

did not quote: "This is the day which the Lord hath made."

And in what other ways was she herself, and separate from her neighbors? She had a superb soprano voice, untrained, but true, smooth, soaring. When she sang, the music poured like a flood into every corner of the house. She came of a family of singers; her brothers had been enrolled among the choristers in the parish church of a Saxon country town, an older sister enriched with a voice even more beautiful than her own. Music was a portion of her heredity, which she had fallen heir to as she had to her gayety and her fine-fingered, short, efficient hands. She took her possession very simply, as one does the fact of good birth, or the set of black pearls handed down by a stately grandmother.

I am confident that her soaring soprano was something to talk and dream about. I know that people halted in the quiet street outside to listen to her singing; when it was finished, they did not forget it. It came back to them as does the sound of running water at twilight, when one star pushes out of the rich-colored sky.

She sang snatches of florid hymns as she went about her household tasks, and later,

romantic songs, full of trills and high, sorrowful notes, stanza by stanza, learned at singing classes, or out of well-thumbed, long-backed, mellow old books. The rooms shook with that music.

She sang, almost with her youthful volume and sweetness, until she was eighty. Then the end came. One day she could sing, the next day she could not.

And was she a handsome, or a pretty woman? She had soft grey eyes, fair hair, which turned white as she grew older, and lay like a gentle crown about her face, and a good country complexion. I think that people in general would have said that she was nice-looking. She should have worn smoke-blue frocks, or blue of that color which paints the petaled wheel of the succory flower, or else the brisk green of the unfolding apple-leaf. She wore, instead, black, grey, purple, the last of all shades from that of a hill's peak down to the mistiest tinge of lilac or violet, and she had done so, except for a brief interval of a few months, ever since the end of the Civil War. Her brothers, her sisters, her parents all went. By the time that the mourning period, with its swathing veil and gloom of garments, was over for each, she

considered herself too far removed from youth to deck herself in its cheerful colors, so kept to the long-familiar black, or grey, or purple. These gave her an age which did not belong to her, or lessened that look of April which was hers by every right of her gusty spirit. The interval of a few months in which she had dressed otherwise, happened when I was a child. She had bought herself a new bonnet, trimmed with bands of ribbon; the ribbon was a striped black and white, with an edge of clear corn-color. The next thing I remember, was that she was tall and unsmiling, sober-frocked again, a long crepe veil floating down her back.

We used to beg her to wear white, and she compromised as far as to put on waists of that color, but somehow objected—due perhaps to some Victorian rant about vanity and the sins of the flesh—to wear an entire gown of the same.

I wish that she had not been so inflexible in regard to the matter. I would love to recall her in thin white, or the blue of succory blossoms. As it is, I can see her very plainly in her palest lavender, standing quite still, with a smile on her lips, a slow, faintly knowing

smile, as provocative as that of Mona Lisa.

My father was a silent man, with the tense and stern characteristics of his Welsh ancestry. My mother's were the direct opposite of his, so opposite, in fact, that even when I was very young, I wondered how it had happened that they had fallen in love with each other. I knew nothing, of course, of the sharp and enduring attraction which differences make. He was a rover; the wind of the wild highways sounded in his ears. He was a business man, so literal that he was at times almost unintelligible. My mother was satisfied with the strait responsibilities of home. Yet she was flexible; she could twist and turn affairs to a practical advantage and account. Between the rover and the man of business in him, my father was often helpless; each pulled him in an opposing direction. Here was where my mother's strange divination, or inspiration—call it what you will—leaped in and brought the matter to a definite and safe conclusion.

He was a man of more tenacious substance than she, a fearless man, with a kind of secret nobility, which resulted in his doing generous deeds that no one except by accident ever found out. For instance, he was always giv-

ing money—lending, he gently called it—to men worse off than himself, or hunting up jobs for some dilapidated cart-driver, or cellar-digger, or carrier of hods with whom he had a stray acquaintance. To the last hour they came to him for a very real and substantial assistance.

His silence led to misunderstandings between his neighbors and himself. I call it silence; but it was really a congenital inability for free expression, not inarticulateness, but downright incoherence. It was both a hindrance and an asset, and as the latter, it is probable that occasionally—as will happen with assets—it was overemphasized. It also taught him to underestimate the opinions of others; as he would not explain, neither would they; he took this as a sign, not of independence, as it was, but of acquiescence.

I never, any more than the rest of his children, questioned the authority of my father. He stood like a rock. There was no wheedling or teasing, or begging him, as in the case of my mother, who had cushiony places which you could prick—if you kept at it in a judicious manner—into carrying out your small, imperious wishes.

He had been a soldier in the Confederate

army, and once in a rare moment, when he had told us of a scrap of experience during a battle, I asked him: "Father, were you afraid?" He looked at me; that was all, and in that look, I had my answer. It said: "I was doing what I had to do. Could I be afraid?" This is one of the most vital remembrances I have of my father, and with it there comes a half-distinct picture of a steep orchard, and under the innocent trees a squad of men detailed to carry water, and the shells bursting, and falling, and blazing all around them. I remember also a serious illness when I was a short-frocked child, and of his carrying me in his arms for hours at a time. He had a great way with his babies. One tune, and one tune only, did he know, and that was "Old Dog Tray," and he reserved it for the especial time when the youngest Reese was ready for his crib and sound slumber. He had no ear, and his voice was neither tenor, bass, nor baritone, but a continuous drone along two or three solemn, lean, monotonous notes, which, however, proved musically satisfactory to the sleepy child.

My father died many years before my mother, so long ago that he is now scarcely more than a misty figure, and from the day

of his death, and little by little, she became the single and assured autocrat of the neighborhood. A lively tyranny, if that at all, which expended itself in an extraordinary straightforwardness of speech, which sometimes set us to trembling, but at others rocked us with bubbling and unholy glee. She said all and much more which we would have loved to say, if we had dared. The rector, the greengrocer, the boy who came to mend the spouts all listened—as they must—to the unfrocked, explicit truth. Perhaps all her life she had had an unexpressed and sharp yearning to be mistress of something beside her easy-moving, rather dull household, and the opportunity offering, she had snatched it as a matter of course; in a sense it was a long-delayed, gilded triumph.

She died very early one August morning in 1917, having lived nearly eighty-seven years. It was hard for us to pass the house which had been hers for nearly a score of Augusts. It had gone into the hands of strangers. It had a solemn look. April had abandoned it. It was given over—or so we saw it—to uses and to mortals that were far from spring, and the tricks and quips of tender, blowing and growing things.

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